PEACE MAKER™ 2

ピースメーカー

Nanae Chrono

PEACE MAKER

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Peace Maker Volume 2
Created By Nanae Chrono

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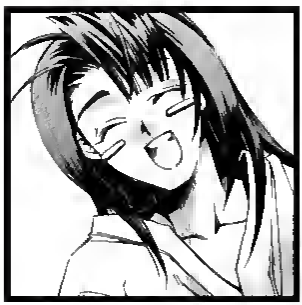
Volume 2

by Nanae Chrono

ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE

HIJIKATA'S PAGE

BRASH TETSU HAS JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI TO LEARN TO BECOME STRONG. HE WANTS TO GET REVENGE ON HIS PARENTS' MURDERERS, CHOUSHUU REBELS. ALTHOUGH HE JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI WITH ASPIRATIONS OF BECOMING A SWORDSMAN, HE'S BEEN ASSIGNED THE THANKLESS DUTY OF HIJIKATA'S PAGE.



OKITA SOUJI

CAPTAIN OF THE FIRST SQUAD

THE BEST SWORDSMAN IN THE SHINSENGUMI. HE'S GENERALLY CALM AND FRIENDLY, BUT WIELDING A BLADE CAN TRANSFORM HIM INTO A HEARTLESS KILLER.

HIJIKATA TOSHIZOU

VICE COMMANDER

BECAUSE OF HIS COLD DEMEANOR AND BRUTALITY, HE IS KNOWN AS THE "DEMON VICE COMMANDER."

MAIN CHARACTERS

YAMAZAKI SUSUMU

SHINSENGUMI NINJA

A SPY FOR THE SHINSENGUMI, HE REPORTS TO HIJIKATA. TACITURN AND COLD, HE HOLDS MANY SECRETS.

KONDOU ISAMI

DIRECTOR

A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE SHINSENGUMI AND ALSO A MASTER AT THE SHEIKAN DOJO IN EDO, THE MAIN DOJO OF THE TENNEN RISHIN STYLE.

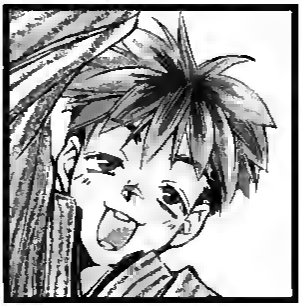
HARADA SANOSUKE

CAPTAIN OF THE TENTH SQUAD

A GIANT AMONG MEN, HE'S A MASTER OF THE SPEAR IN THE HOZOIN SCHOOL STYLE. HE'S GOOD FRIENDS WITH SHINPACHI.

ICHIMURA TATSUNOSUKE

TETSU'S OLDER BOTHER AND GUARDIAN. HE'S ALWAYS WORRYING ABOUT TETSU. TATSU WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH SWORDFIGHTING, AND IS A BOOKKEEPER FOR THE SHINSENGUMI.



NAGAKURA SHINPACHI

CAPTAIN OF THE SECOND SQUAD

SMALL BUT STRONG. A SWORDSMAN LIKE OKITA. HE FIGHTS IN THE SHINTO-MUNEN SCHOOL STYLE.

SAYA

TETSU SAVED HER FROM SOME RUFFIANS, AND NOW THE TWO ARE FRIENDS. SAYA CANNOT SPEAK, BUT COMMUNICATES THROUGH HAND GESTURES AND WRITING.

SHINSENGUMI MEMBERS

PERSONS OUTSIDE THE SHINSENGUMI

THE STORY OF PEACE MAKER

IN THE FIRST YEAR OF GENJI, 1864, JAPAN WAS IN GREAT TURMOIL. MILITANT AND XENOPHOBIC FORCES, WHICH HAD LONG OPPOSED THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE, ADVOCATED EXPELLING WESTERN INFLUENCE AND RESTORING THE EMPEROR IN KYOTO TO POWER. TO PROTECT THE SHOGUNATE'S INTEREST IN KYOTO, A LEGENDARY PEACEKEEPING FORCE WAS FORMED FROM TWO HUNDRED-SOME RONIN. THEY WERE THE SHINSENGUMI. THIS IS THE STORY OF ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE, WHO SOUGHT TO JOIN THEM.

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ODAKA!!
WHERE ARE YOU, ODAKA?!
DAMN THOSE RONIN!
OW!
SHIT!
ODAKA ...?!

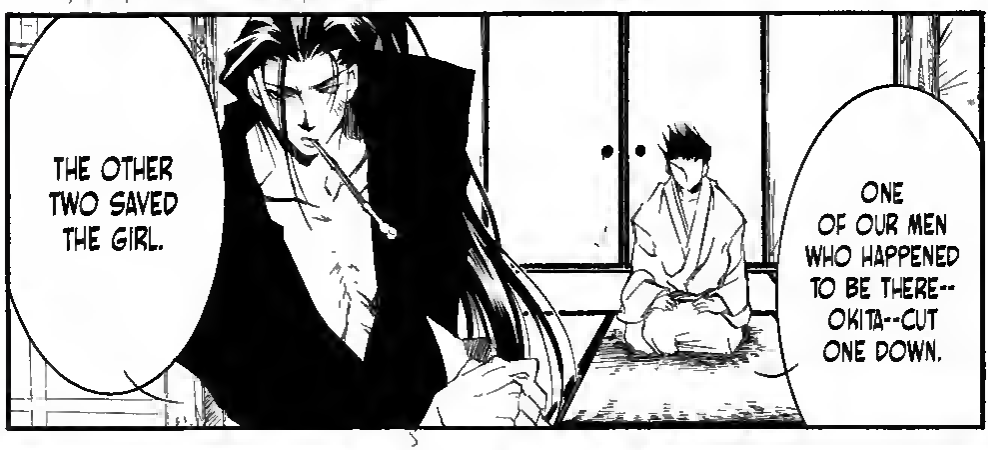
Act.6
Revolution
一、士道ニ背ク間敷事
一、局ヲ脱スルヲ許サズ
一、勝手ニ金策致ス可カラズ
一、勝手ニ訴訟取扱フ可カラズ

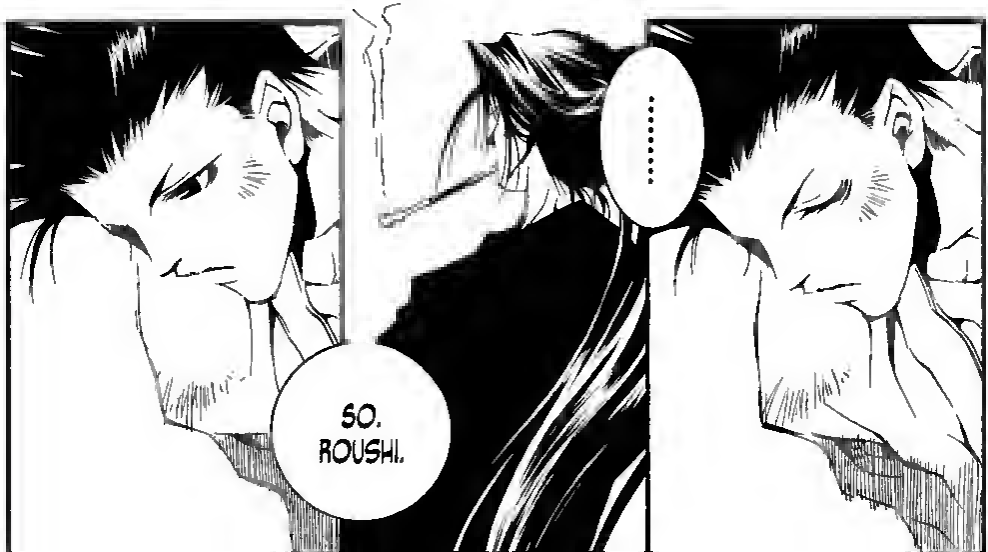
I HAVE NO EXCUSE.

I LET MYSELF BE CAUGHT UP. THIS DISTURBANCE... WAS CAUSED BY MY OWN INATTENTION.
GIVE ME YOUR REPORT
I KNOW YOU TO BE RELIABLE

* Roushi: Another name for ronin, or wandering samurai

* Choujin: People from the Choushuu province





RUNNING INTO SOUJI WAS PLAIN BAD LUCK FOR THEM.
BUT WE...
...MANAGED TO DISCOVER SOMETHING INTERESTING.
THOSE THREE CHOUJIN WERE BLACKMAILING THE KID.
THEY HAD PAMPHLETS WRITTEN IN VERY POOR CHOUSHUU DIALECT.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
.....

THEY'RE LIKELY VERY RECENT ARRIVALS TO THE CAPITAL.
ANYONE WHO KNEW OUR REPUTATION WOULDN'T TRY SUCH A VULGAR TRICK.
THEY MUSTN'T HAVE BEEN HIDING HERE FOR VERY LONG.
SO WE'RE DEALING WITH A GROUP OF IGNORANT, HAYSEED SAMURAI.

WHAT TROUBLES ME IS THAT MASUYA DIDN'T REPORT THE DISTURBANCE IN FRONT OF HIS SHOP.
MMM.

WE'LL FATTEN THOSE HOGS BEFORE WE TAKE THEM TO MARKET.
NO.
SHALL I DETAIN HIM?

IT WOULD BE ONE THING IF THEY WERE JUST BUMPKINS, COME TO SEE THE FLOWERS AND ENDING UP IN A TEAHOUSE SCUFFLE...
..BUT THESE REVOLUTIONARIES HAVE A PLAN. NO MATTER HOW SLOPPY THEY SEEM, THEY'RE PLANNING SOMETHING.
WE CAN'T HOLD MASUYA IF WE BRING HIM IN NOW...
...BUT LET'S SEE HOW HE DIGESTS THE INFORMATION HE'LL BE FED.
WHEN HE'S PLUMPED AND COOKED, WE'LL BITE.
BUT, RESPECTFULLY...
...WON'T THIS INCIDENT FORCE THEM INTO HIDING?

NOT ONLY HAVE I IMPEDED INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS... I'VE ALERTED AND AGITATED THE ENEMY.
IT IS MY FAILURE.
I WILL ACCEPT THE PUNISHMENT.
.....
NO ONE WILL BE PUNISHED OVER TODAY'S INCIDENT.

I'LL TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY.
SIR.
YAMA-ZAKI-KUN.

YOU THINK ME...
...TOO LENIENT?
YOU ARE WITHOUT FLAW.
YOUR WORDS AND DEEDS ARE EXERCISES OF PERFECTION.

THAT'S A FIRST.

DUDE SLAPPED ME AND THEN WALKED AWAY!
"WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR JOB IS?" "WHY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE A PAGE?" ACTING LIKE HE KNEW ME OR SOMETHING!
So arrogant!
SNAP
.....
.....
TO MAKE YAMAZAKI ANGRY!
YOU REALLY ARE IMPRESSIVE.

DID YOU NOTICE THAT THOSE RONIN WERE CHOUJIN?
DO YOU AGREE THAT MASUYA IS MOST LIKELY INVOLVED WITH THEM?
フルフル…
THIS DISTURBANCE HAS ALMOST CERTAINLY CAUSED OTHER CHOUJIN TO BECOME WARY
YAMAZAKI-SAN COULDN'T HIDE HIS IRRITATION AT THAT, RIGHT?

OF COURSE THEY WERE.
THOSE CHOUSHUU GUYS WERE BAD!
BUT!
GRR
WELL...SO I GOT MYSELF INVOLVED, WHICH WAS WRONG, BUT THEN I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
AND THANKS TO THAT, THEY WERE--AS YOU MIGHT SAY--"SPANKED" BY OUR TWO "ROUSHI OF JUSTICE."
ROUSHI? US?
THE REMAINING BAD GUY WAS "CUT DOWN BY THE FAMED OKITA OF THE SHINSENGUMI."

HUH?
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?
WHY DID...
とり…

WHY?!
WHY DID YOU KILL HIM?!
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
WHY ...?!
WASN'T THE FIGHT ALREADY OVER?!
COULDN'T YOU HAVE JUST ARRESTED HIM?!

THOSE PEOPLE WERE UNLUCKY.
I WASN'T DISGUISED AS A ROUSHI OF JUSTICE.
HE FACED OKITA OF THE SHINSENGUMI WITH A SWORD.
.....
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
squee!
THERE WERE LIKELY MORE CHOUJIN HIDDEN IN MASUYA'S STORE.

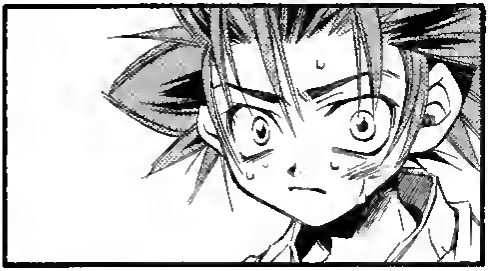
IF THE SHINSENGUMI HAD COME, EVEN AS BACK UP, THEY WOULD HAVE CERTAINLY RUN AWAY.
BUT IF WE DID NOTHING, YOUR LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN IN DANGER.
...BUT WE COULDN'T MOBILIZE THE ENTIRE SHINSENGUMI OVER SO SMALL A DISTURBANCE.
IT PROBABLY CHILLED THEM TO THEIR MARROW, SEEING THEIR BROTHERS CUT DOWN IN FRONT OF THE STORE...
TO ALL OBSERVERS, IT SHOULD HAVE APPEARED A STREET BRAWL BETWEEN ROUSHI.
THE ONLY WAY WAS FOR NAGAKURA-SAN, HARADA-SAN AND ME TO CUT IN AS RONIN.
.....
THOSE TWO HAD PROBABLY FINISHED THEIR BUSINESS. BUT I--

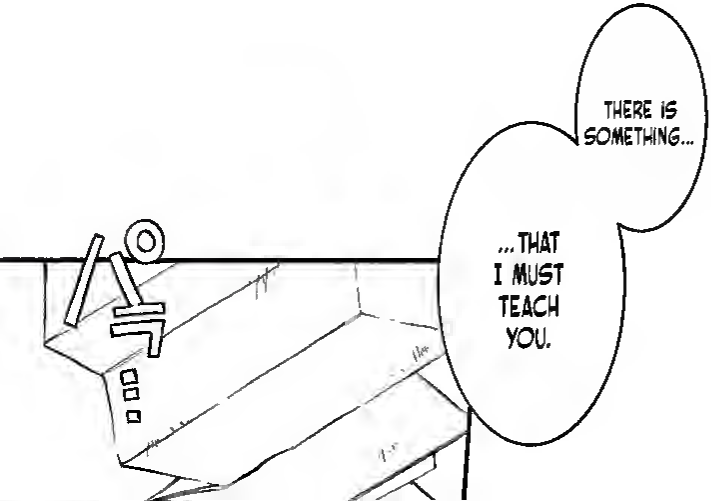
AT THAT POINT, IT WAS TOO LATE FOR ME TO LEAD HIM BACK TO HEADQUARTERS BY THE POINT OF MY KATANA.
IF HE GOT AWAY, HE'D HAVE REPORTED BACK ABOUT ME.
EVEN IF HE KNEW WHO YOU WERE, THAT'S NO REASON TO KILL HIM!
BECAUSE I...
...CALLED OUT YOUR NAME.
IT ISN'T YOUR FAULT.
HE WAS UNLUCKY.
THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.

"THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT"?!
YOU ENDED HIS LIFE!
"THAT'S ALL"?
AREN'T CHOUJIN PEOPLE? SOMEONE'S CHILD?
SOMEONE'S FATHER?
YES, BUT...
...I AM NOT A PERSON. I AM NO ONE'S CHILD.

BECAUSE...
...I AM A DEMON'S CHILD.

.....
TETSU-KUN.




THERE IS SOMETHING...
...THAT I MUST TEACH YOU.

THE LAWS OF THE SHINSENGUMI.
HIJIKATA-SAN CAME UP WITH THIS. TRULY, THEY ARE LAWS FOR DEMONS!
THIS IS THE ULTIMATE GOVERNOR OF THE SHINSENGUMI.
"DISOBEYING THE SAMURAI CODE IN ANY WAY."

"ENGAGING IN PRIVATE LITIGATION."
"ENGAGING IN PRIVATE FIGHTS."
"LEAVING THE SHINSENGUMI."
"RAISING PRIVATE FUNDS."
"ANY SHINSENGUMI WHO COMMITS ANY OF THE ABOVE TRESPASSES..."
BDMP
"...WILL COMMIT..."
"...RITUAL SUICIDE."
UNDER THE SAMURAI CODE, LOSING TO AN ENEMY IS INEXCUSABLE.

ONCE YOU DRAW YOUR SWORD...
...AND YOU FACE YOUR ENEMY...
...ONE OF YOU MUST DIE.
BEING A PAGE IS THE ONE AND ONLY WAY TO AVOID THAT DANGER.
THAT'S WHY...!
"WHY DO YOU THINK YOU'RE A PAGE?"
BUT YOUR LIFE IS YOUR OWN.
IT IS YOU WHO MUST CHOOSE.

IF YOU WANT TO TAKE REVENGE...
IF YOU WANT TO GROW STRONG...
...NOW IS THE TIME.
IF YOU WANT TO TAKE UP THE SWORD THAT KILLS...

UMM...
I'M SURE IT WAS HERE SOME-WHERE.
Just a little more...
NOW IS THE TIME TO PREPARE YOURSELF...
...TO BECOME A DEMON.
スッ
!!!
HEY, TETSU!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THERE...
ぽす。
バサ
AAH!
THOSE ARE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS--!
TETSU, WHAT--

!
TETSU.
WHAT HAPPENED?

ONE OF OUR COMRADES HAS BEEN CUT DOWN.
IS THAT SO?
*Sign: Masuya
ONCE AGAIN, DISTURBING THINGS HAPPEN THE MINUTE I LEAVE TOWN.
IT'S NOT THAT BAD.
IT LOOKED LIKE HORSEPLAY. A STREET SKIRMISH.
THAT'S NOT TO SAY WE HADN'T DONE ANYTHING WRONG...
...APPARENTLY WE WENT A LITTLE OVERBOARD.
Ha ha...
.....

"EXECUTION."
?
"UNFORGIVABLE."
.....
THEY'D JUST COME TO KYO, AND GOT CARRIED AWAY TEASING SOME CHILD... YOU KNOW?
*Kyo: Old name for Kyoto.
.....!!
THAT'S WHAT HAS ARISEN.
WELL, IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
INDISPENSABLE AND RARE IS THE WARRIOR WHO "REVERES THE EMPEROR, EXPELS THE BARBARIANS"...

...HAS PRIDE IN SPIRIT...
...A SINCERE SOUL...
...AND POSSESSES THE POWER TO BE HIMSELF A SWORD AGAINST THE PRETENDERS.
YOSHIDA-SENSEI!!
AND HONORED IS HE WHO WEARS THAT MOST HIGH "BEAUTY" ...
Y--

...THAT RED...
...HIS OWN BLOOD ...
...THAT BEAUTIFUL MADNESS.

YOSHIDA-SENSEI.
NEW COMRADES HAVE JOINED US FROM YOUR HOMELAND.
THEY COME IN GOOD TIME.
GIVE THEM THEIR MISSION.

Act.7
I'm a Loser

COME ON.
IF YOU DON'T TALK, I WON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG.
Sigh...
FAKING SLEEP, HUH?
.....
ZZZZ...
IS THIS NORMAL FOR A BOY OF FIFTEEN?
Alright. Well, I was the one who raised you.
I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?
CAN'T BE HELPED.

...ra.
ICHI-
MURA.
THIS PLACE ISN'T FOR YOU.
ICHIMURA!!
HMM
?
SORRY TO BOTHER YOU AT SUCH A STRESSFUL TIME.
PERHAPS YOU'D RATHER BE USING THAT BRAIN ON THIS, HMM?
...ON YOUR WORK?
IS YOUR MIND...
I'm sorry...

HERE YOU ARE.
...THANK YOU.
HERE YOU ARE.

...
YOU'RE
...
ズズ...
YOU'RE WELCOME.
OH!
THANK YOU, TETSUN-OSUKE-KUN.
...TOSHI'S PAGE, THOUGH, AREN'T YOU?
Not that I mind
.....
CHIRP
IT'S KINDA...
... LEISURELY TODAY, ISN'T IT?

NO, NO. FOR THE SHINSENGUMI IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS.
Hrm...
YOU JUST HAPPENED TO SHOW UP ON A COUPLE OF BUSY DAYS.
BOTH BUSY AND SLOW ARE PROOF OF PEACE IN THIS CITY OF KYO.
I GUESS.
しゃっ
SO I HAVE TIME TO PRACTICE MY HAND-WRITING.
BEHOLD! I'VE ALSO PRACTICED MY OTHER TECHNIQUE!
UH, YEAH.
SO COLD
MAYBE IT'S NOT A YOUNG MAN'S OCCUPATION.

SOMETHING SO BEAUTIFUL AND TRANQUIL.
IT PROBABLY BORES YOU.
Ha ha ha.
.....
NO. I LIKE IT.
IT SCARES ME TO LIKE IT.

YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH WORK FOR TODAY.
WORRIES ARE POISONS FOR THE BODY.
GO OUT AND GET SOME FRESH AIR.

.....!
YOU DON'T NEED TO REPAY ME FOR ANYTHING.
YOU'RE MAKING ME BLUSH!
Mibu Temple

EVEN SO, GOOD JOB FIGURING OUT I'M IN THE SHINSENGUMI.
.....
AH.
THAT SO?
Because you said, "Okita-san."
And you are?
EH? AH... ME?
I'M TETSUNO-SUKE.
ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

YOU...
.....
Saya
...COULD IT BE...
...YOU CAN'T...
.....

SAYA. THAT'S A NICE NAME!!
WELL, IT'S OKAY.
IT'S NO BIG DEAL.
WHAT? IS THERE SOMETHING ON MY FACE?
AH. RED BEAN PASTE!
.....
HEY! STOP LAUGH-ING!
I SAID HEY!!
.....
Hmh hmh

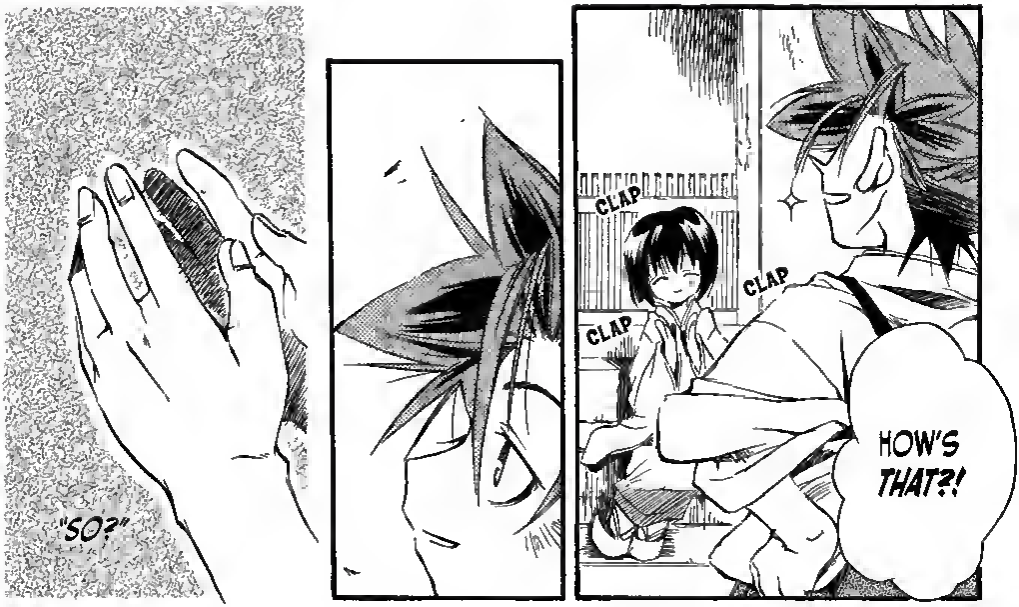
AAAH! SORRY!
THROW IT BACK HERE, BIG BRO!
ALL RIGHT! HERE GOES!

WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS YOUR DAD, SAYA?
HEY...
.....
Thank!
"TATSUNOSUKE! TETSUNOSUKE! COME ON, I'LL TEACH YOU A GOOD TRICK."
ONE STEP.
TWO STEPS.

"AND WHEN YOU THINK YOU'RE FAR ENOUGH AWAY, AIM AND SHOOT!"
"DAAAD...!"
"TE-I!"
"FIRST, PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN YOU AND THE OFFERING BOX."
"WHAT? WHAT?!"
THREE STEPS.
"MOM! DAD'S PLAYING WITH THE OFFERINGS!"
"AAAH!"
It didn't go in!
"TATSUNOSUKE! COME ON, LISTEN TO THE ENTIRE THING, OKAY?"
No!!
FOUR STEPS.
"IF YOU GET YOUR OFFERING IN THE OFFERING BOX FROM A GOOD DISTANCE..."
"...THE CHANCES OF YOUR DESIRE BEING FULFILLED GO WAY UP!"
FIVE STEPS.
"REALLY?!"
"WHAT'S THE ACTUAL PROBABILITY ON THAT? GIVE US SOME NUMBERS."
...?
SIX STEPS.

"WELL, IF YOU COME AND DO THIS EVERY YEAR..."
"BUT MINE WON'T GO IN!"
SEVEN STEPS.
EIGHT STEPS.
"...THEN SOMEDAY YOU'LL BE ABLE TO THROW IT IN FROM TEN STEPS AWAY, JUST LIKE PAPA!"
NINE STEPS...
...TEN STEPS.

チャリ…
ガ
ゴゴゴ
!!



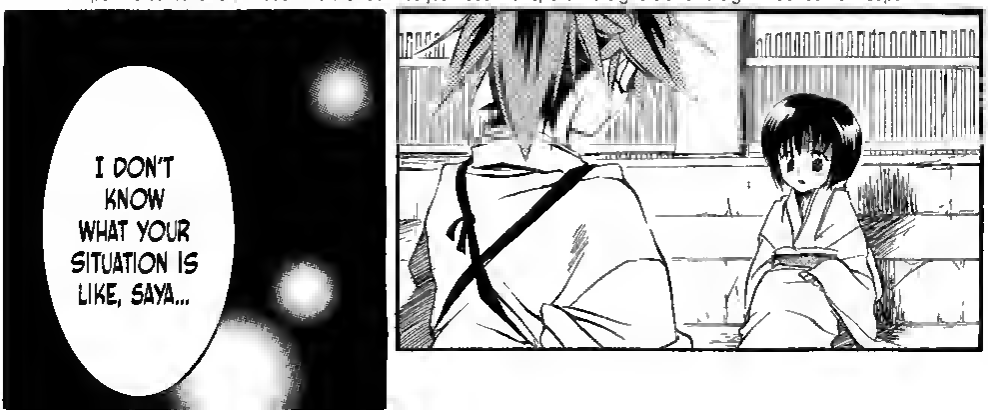
"THAT'S EASY!"

"WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO ASK FOR WHEN YOUR CHANCES HAVE GONE UP 10%?"

MY DAD... WELL...
.....?

BECAUSE OF THAT...
I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE LEARNED THEM, BUT HE USED FOREIGN WORDS A LOT.
IF YOU MET HIM...
...HE'S KIND OF A WEIRD GUY.
...TWO YEARS AGO...
...HE WAS KILLED BY MEN FROM CHOUSHUU. "EXPEL THE BARBARIANS," THEY SAID.
NOW IT'S JUST ME AND TATSU.
MOM GOT CAUGHT UP IN IT, TOO.

"Expel the barbarians". Those who are "sonnou joui" seek to repel all foreigners and foreign influence from Japan.

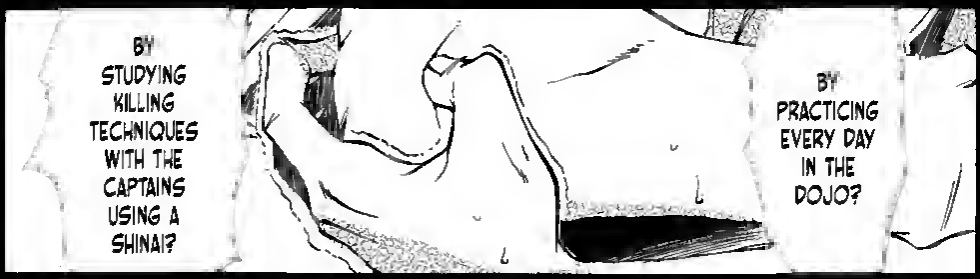


...BUT TO ME, IT'S BETTER TO THINK, "THEY'RE DEAD"...
...THAN TO THINK, "THEY'RE SAVED." RIGHT?
SAYA...
カキ...
Ha ha...
TALKING ABOUT ALL THAT... KIND OF MORBID.
SORRY!

YOU, TOO?
SAYA.
killed

.....
HAVEN'T YOU THOUGHT ABOUT WANTING TO GET REVENGE AND KILL THEM?
I STILL THINK LIKE THAT.
...I JOINED THE SHINSENGUMI.
TO GET STRONG ENOUGH TO KILL, JUST TO KILL THAT MAN...
BUT YOU KNOW...

"ANY SHINSENGUMI WHO COMMITS ANY OF THE ABOVE TRESPASSES..."



"...WILL COMMIT RITUAL SUICIDE."

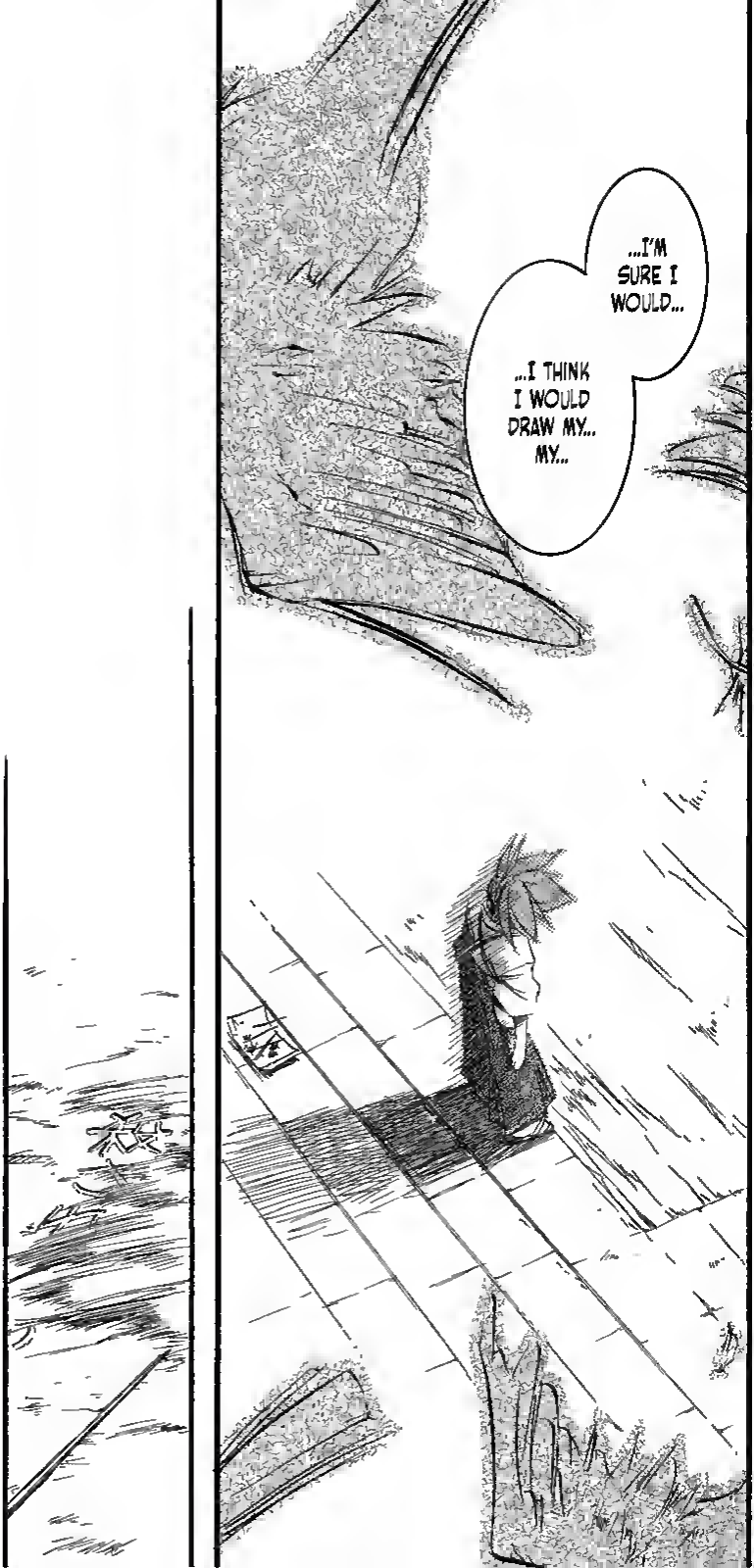
...DO I HAVE TO KILL PEOPLE?
TO BECOME STRONG...
THE TWO STRONGEST FEELINGS I HAVE CONTRADICT EACH OTHER.
Can't you just stay like

I'M SORRY, SAYA.
I'M SORRY.
I REALLY DON'T WANT TO BE A KILLER.
I CAN BEAR JUST BEING A PAGE...
...BUT THEN...
...I DON'T WANNA...
...STAY WEAK!!

.....
...SAYA?
SHAKE
SHAKE

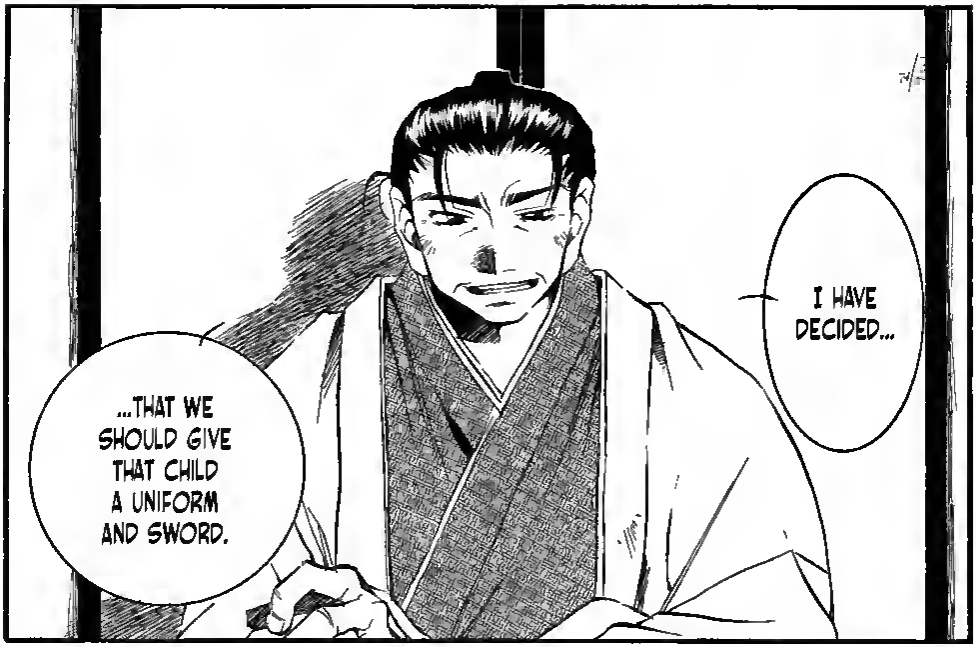
WAIT!
WHAT HAP-PENED?
SAYA!

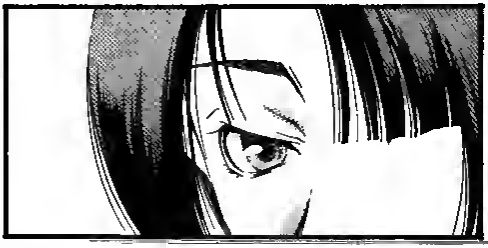
YOU KNOW WHAT?
I THINK, IF I KNEW...
...IF I KNEW WHO THAT MAN WAS...
...I WOULD...


...I'M SURE I WOULD...
...I THINK I WOULD DRAW MY... MY...

KONDOU-SAN.
HIJIKATA-SAN.
IT SEEMS THAT SANNAN-SAN AND TOUDOU-SAN WILL BE RETURNING TOMORROW.
ZZZ...
WHAT? HAS THERE BEEN ANY TROUBLE?
OH, NO, IT JUST LOOKS LIKE HE'S STAYING IN SHIMABARA.
Squee!
"IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE SEEN AKESATO," HE SAYS
Having a bad dream
OH, SO THAT'S WHAT IT IS!
Ha ha ha ha...
NO. THAT'S NOT IT.

OH MY.
Here you go
ARE YOU STILL SAYING THINGS LIKE THAT, TOSHI?
Unbelievable!
IT'S AN EXCUSE. SO THEY DON'T HAVE TO SEE MY FACE
IT'S TOO BAD. I WANTED TO TELL SANNAN-SAN ABOUT TETSU-KUN.
Will you knock it off?!
Here.
HE LOVES CHILDREN. SO HE'LL CERTAINLY GIVE A WARM WELCOME.
UNLIKE SOMEONE WE KNOW. ♡
YOU'RE RIGHT, HE SOUNDS LIKE HE NEEDS SOME AFFECTION!
THAT'S RIGHT, TOSHI. SPEAKING OF TETSUNOSUKE-KUN...

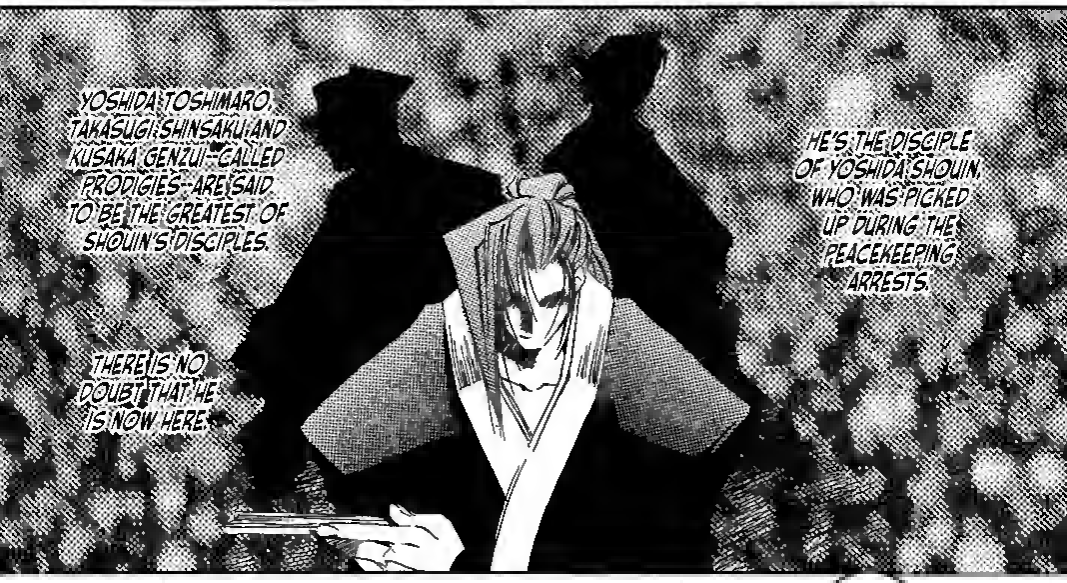

I HAVE DECIDED...
...THAT WE SHOULD GIVE THAT CHILD A UNIFORM AND SWORD.



IT SEEMS WE HAVE SOME OBJEC-TIONS.
BUT IF HE GRABS A KATANA, HIS ANSWER WILL COME FROM NATURE.

?!
WHAT? WHAT'S COME?!
THIS DISCUSSION WILL HAVE TO WAIT.
IT'S COME.
.....
GOOD WORK. HURRY WITH YOUR REPORT.
OH!
I APOLOGIZE FOR INTERRUPTING YOUR DISCUSSION.
OH, YAMAZAKI-SAN?
WHAT'S HAPPENED? IS CHOUSHUU ON THE MOVE?!
Here?
NO, THIS IS A REPORT FOR THE VICE COMMANDER.
THESE ARE THE DETAILS OF MY INVESTIGATION OF THE RECENT FIRES.

THROUGH APRIL OF THIS YEAR WE'VE HAD 34 INDIVIDUAL FIRES.
21 OF THOSE HAVE BEEN EMPTY WAREHOUSES AND HOMES.
ALL HAVE STARTED JUST AFTER THREE IN THE MORNING, WHEN NO PAPER LANTERNS WERE LIT.
IT'S ARSON. AND THAT MEANS...
...YOSHIDA TOSHIMARO HAS COME.
YOSHIDA...
VANGUARD OF THE CHOUSHUU MOVEMENT TO OVERTHROW THE SHOGUNATE AND RESTORE THE EMPEROR.

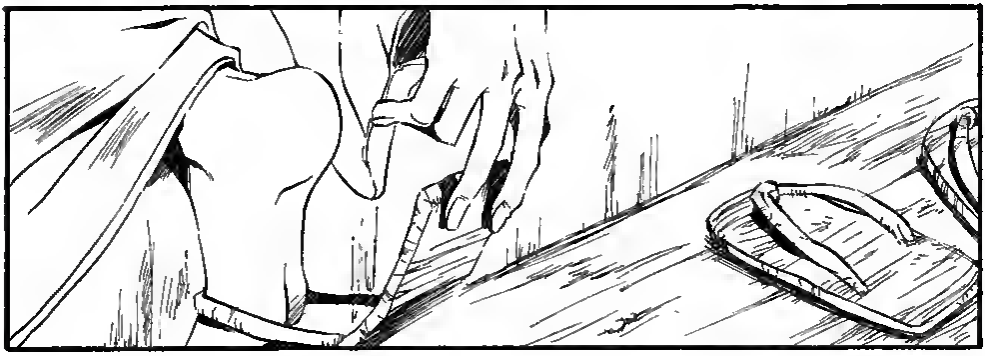

YOSHIDA TOSHIMARO, TAKASUGI SHINSAKU AND KUSAKA GENZUI--CALLED PRODIGIES--ARE SAID TO BE THE GREATEST OF SHOUIN'S DISCIPLES.
HE'S THE DISCIPLE OF YOSHIDA SHOUIN, WHO WAS PICKED UP DURING THE PEACEKEEPING ARRESTS.
THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT HE IS NOW HERE.

Peacekeeping arrests: The 1858 suppression of the anti-shogunate "sonnou joui" movement.

A MAD ARSONIST! IMAGINE!

Act.8
Get Back

Now, now.
SAIZOU, YOU'RE A GOOD PIG, BUT TOSHIZOU'S MAD.
squee
squee
squee
COME NOW, BACK TO YOUR PEN.



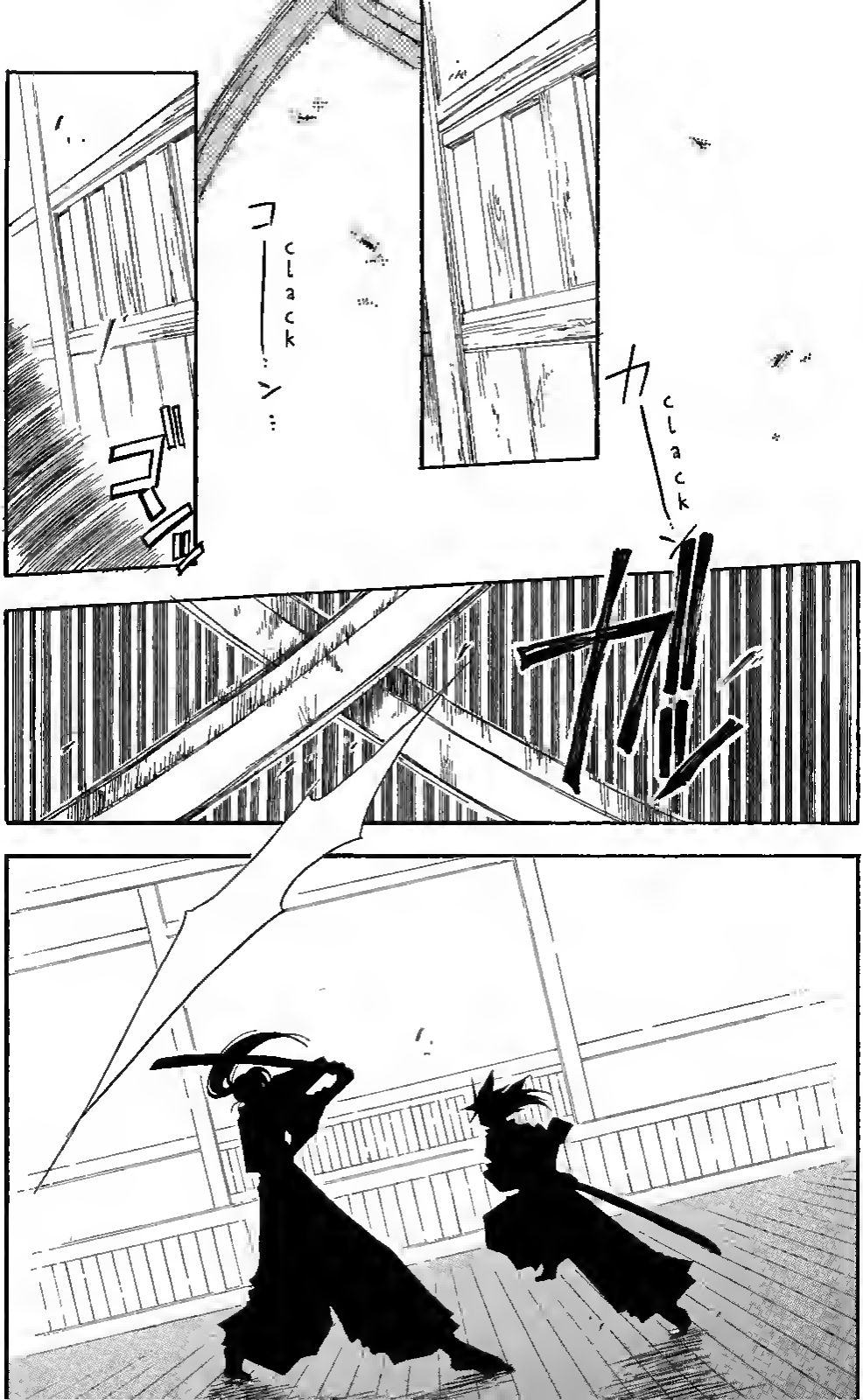
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I STOOD HERE BEFORE A MATCH.
THE NOSTALGIA COMES IN SMALL, TICKLING WAVES.
WE USED SHINAI THEN--PURE BAMBOO PRACTICE SWORDS. BUT NOW THEY'RE JUST BOKUTO. IT'S NOT THE SAME.

*Shinai: bamboo practice sword. Bokuto: wooden practice sword

WHEN I FIRST WANTED TO BECOME STRONG...
...I WAS BRUISED BY THESE ALL THE TIME. BRUISES ON TOP OF BRUISES.
YOU WANNA TUSSLE?

YOU REALLY ARE AN INTERESTING CHILD.

IT TAKES A LOT OF NERVE TO REQUEST ME AS A TRAINING PARTNER.


コーン…
clack
カ
clack
カ!!

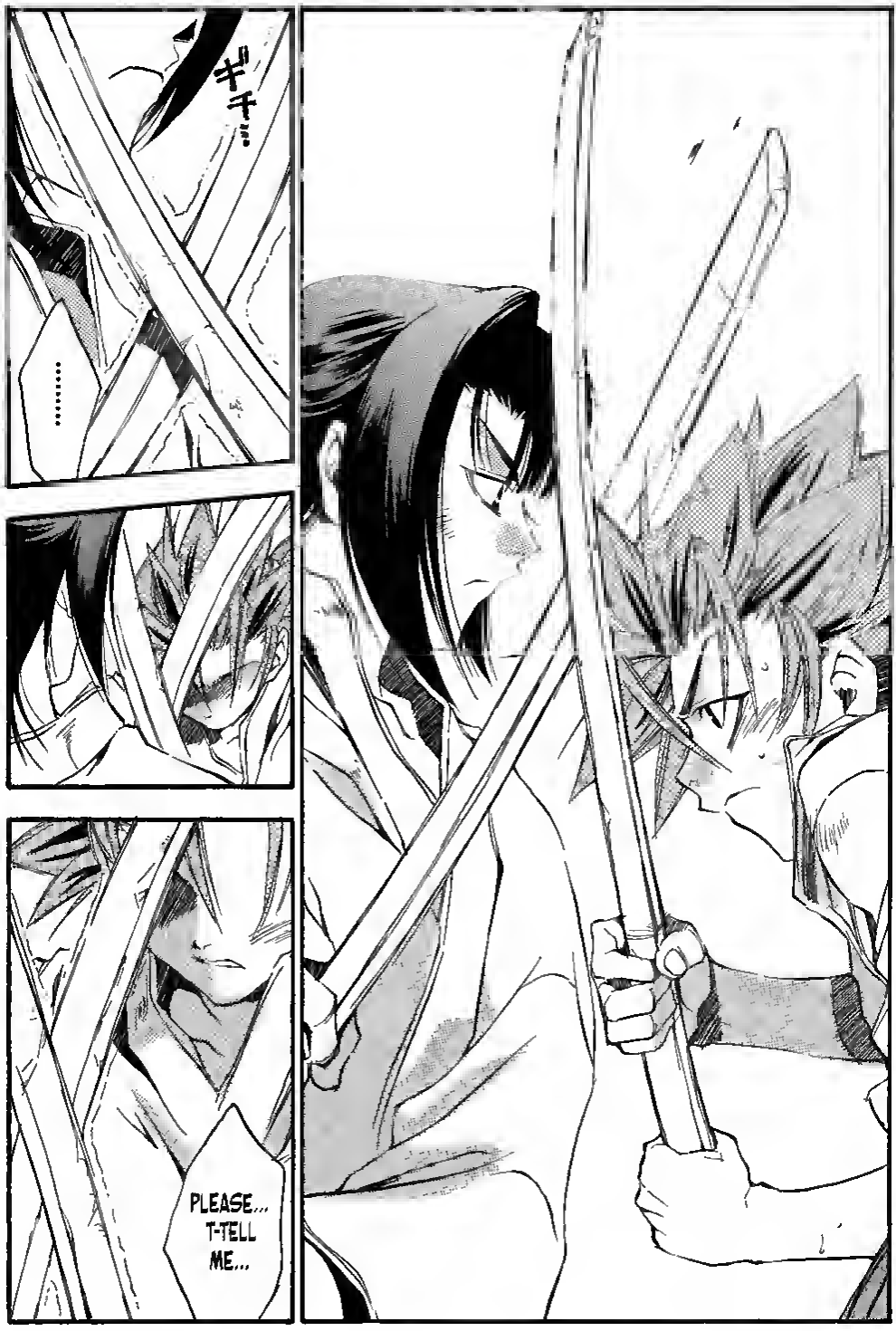
……!
ヒュンヒュン!!

THIS ISN'T A SHINAI. IT'S A PAIN YOU AREN'T USED TO YET.
ATTEND TO YOUR DEFENSE, TETSU-KUN.

STOP HOLDING BACK!
IF YOU DON'T COME AT ME FOR REAL, YOU'LL JUST GET BEAT!

LEAP

ガキィィィ


ギチ…
……
PLEASE... T-TELL ME...

WHY DID YOU TAKE UP THE KATANA?
WHY DID YOU WANT TO BECOME STRONG?

……
I WANT REVENGE, AND THAT MEANS STRENGTH.
BUT...

...I CAN'T...
...EVEN FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON...
...I CAN'T...

GWAAAAH!!
KII
UNGH...
.....
DON'T TELL ME...
...I'VE BROKEN ONE OF YOUR BONES.

COME AT ME LIKE YOU MEAN TO KILL.
A TINGLING ANGER...
...FLINT SPARKS INTO RAGING FLAMES...
...IGNITION TO KILL...
YAAAAAAAAH!!
LIKE THE LAST TIME!
MAKE ME REMEMBER!!

DESPERATION COOLS...
...FIRE TO SMOKING ICE...
...!! AND I AM STOPPED COLD.
OKITA-SAN!

YOU SAID IT BEFORE, RIGHT?!
YOU WANTED TO GET STRONG, RIGHT?! BRUISE ON TOP OF BRUISE, RIGHT?!
TO GO SO FAR THAT YOU COULD KILL SOME-ONE?!
WHY DID YOU DO IT?! WHY?! FIRST, WHY...?!
STOP IT.

MY ANSWER CAN'T BECOME YOUR ANSWER.
.....
I CAN'T DO ANYTHING...
...BUT...

"UNTIL YOU BEAT ME"--NO...
MORE LIKE, "UNTIL YOU'RE SATISFIED"...
...I'LL BE YOUR PARTNER.

Sorry.
Sigh
...
It's cool.
Ha-ha...
.....

UM.
...SINCE I WORKED OUT LIKE THAT! I FEEL REFRESHED!
AAHH! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME...
OKITA-SAN?
YOU REALLY DON'T NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION?
HEY...
...TETSU-KUN.
THANK YOU.

WHY DID YOU TAKE UP THE KATANA? WHY DID YOU BECOME STRONG?
THE ANSWER IS DIFFERENT FOR EACH OF US.
IF YOU TRY TO BE LIKE SOMEONE ELSE..
...YOU'LL WASTE YOUR TIME ON WORTHLESS TASKS.
PATIENCE IS PART OF TRAINING. THINK THAT OVER.

Snore
IF YOU DON'T--
THINK THAT OVER EVERY DAY.
OH, COME ON! I'M IMPARTING WISDOM HERE, TETSU!
YOU REALLY ARE SO MUCH ALIKE.

"WHAT'S YOUR REASON?"

.....
INFILTRATING MASUYA RIGHT NOW WOULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS.
OF THAT I AM WELL AWARE.

AT THIS RATE WE WON'T GET ANYTHING DONE!
I KNOW YOU WON'T RUSH THINGS. THEREFORE...
...IF A "HOTSPRING" WON'T WORK, TRY A "HAIRDRESSER'S BOW."
...THIS IS MY LAST CHANCE.
FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION.

A TEN-POINT WIND PETAL SHURIKEN!!
THE WIND DEMON ?!
チャリ…

Act.9
All I've Got to Do

…

…ボタ…

"WIND DEMON." NO EXAGGERATION THERE, HUH?
YOU'RE QUITE IMPRESSIVE FOR A WOMAN.

YOU SILLY. LITTLE. BOY.

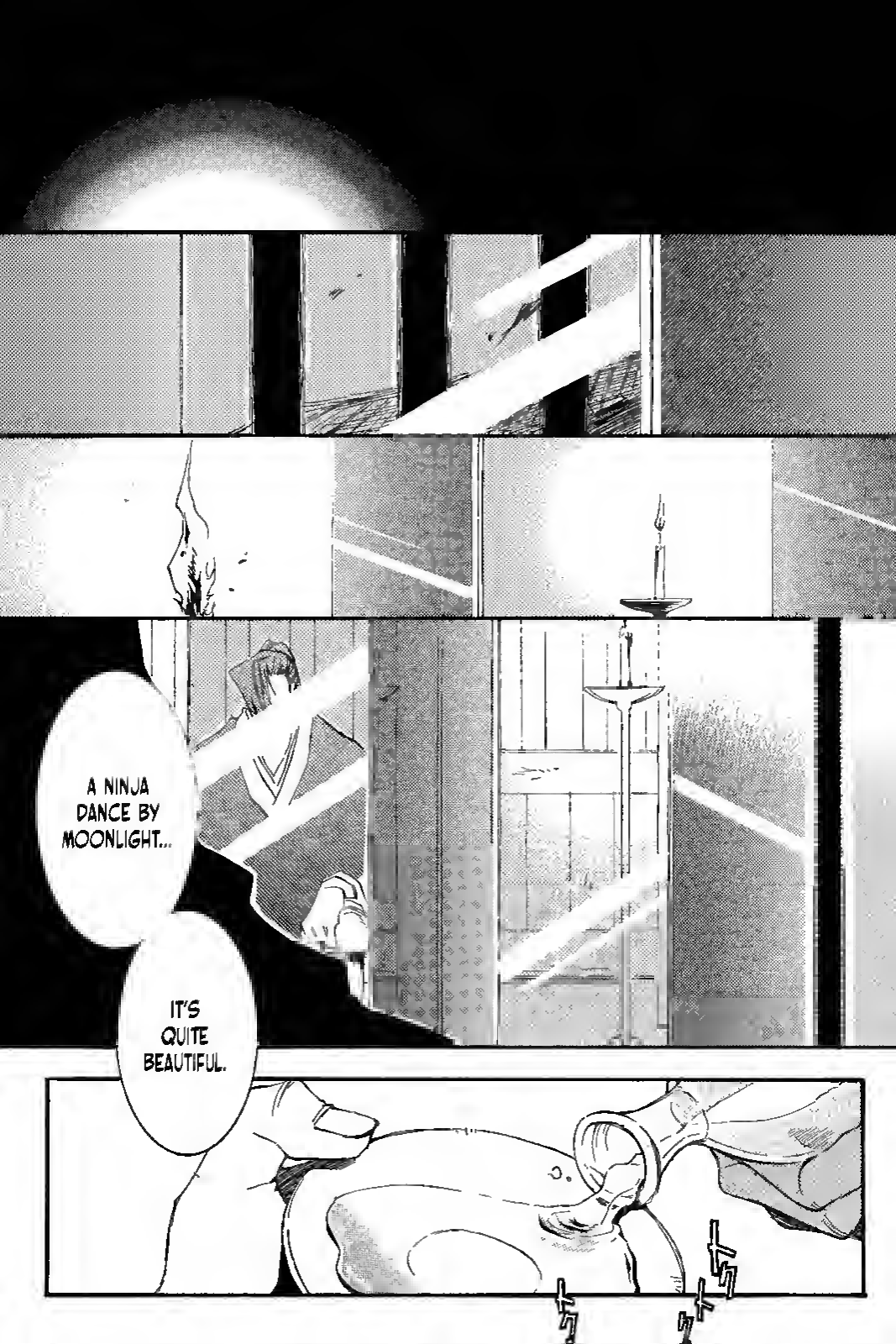
SWIFF
HEH HEH.

GO BACK HOME AND TELL THE SHOGUNATE DOGS...

...WOODEN SOLDIERS...
...ARE EASY TO BURN

ヒョオ
オオオ……
……

みぎ!!


A NINJA DANCE BY MOONLIGHT...
IT'S QUITE BEAUTIFUL.

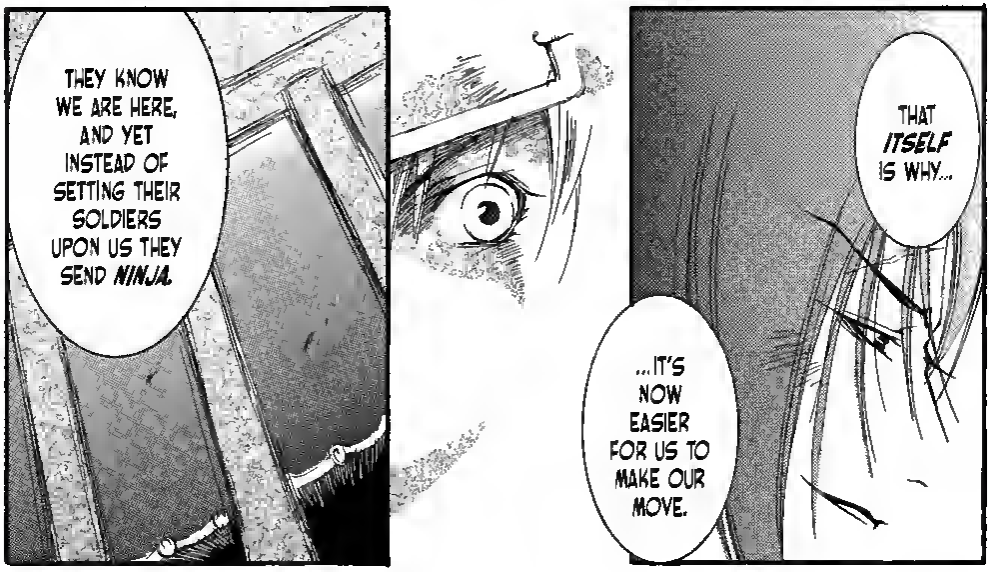
NEXT TIME, I'D LIKE THEM TO PERFORM IN MY ROOM.

Hmph...
BUT THAT NINJA WASN'T A VERY GOOD ASSASSIN.
I COULD'VE TAKEN HIM BY MYSELF!
Heh heh heh
SUCH BIG TALK, MY LITTLE BOY.
?!
IF I HADN'T BEEN HERE, PERHAPS YOU TWO...
...WOULD HAVE HAD HIM BOUND AND BEGGING BY NOW.
OF COURSE, WE ARE GRATEFUL

IT WOULD BE QUITE EMBARRASSING IF THEY OVERHEARD US TALKING IN OUR SLEEP.
BUT YOUR COOPERATION HAS BEEN A TRUE HELP.
NINJA MUST DEAL WITH NINJA.
SENSEI?!

PERHAPS YOUR MOVEMENTS COULD BE QUIETER.
.....
...WHAT YOU SAY IN YOUR SLEEP IS NO HARM
WELL...

*Miburo: Another name for the Shinsengumi, the "ronin" stationed in "Mibu"


THEY KNOW WE ARE HERE, AND YET INSTEAD OF SETTING THEIR SOLDIERS UPON US THEY SEND *NINJA*.
THAT *ITSELF* IS WHY...
...IT'S NOW EASIER FOR US TO MAKE OUR MOVE.

...IF IT'S THE FAMOUS YOSHIDA TOSHIMARO THEN IT WILL BE NO ORDINARY BATTLE.
IF IT'S DEFINITELY ME...
THIS IS, IN PLAIN WORDS, A TRAP.
SO THEY CANNOT SHOW THEIR HAND. *THEY* MUST HIDE; *THEY* MUST WAIT FOR RECONNAISSANCE TO BE COMPLETED.
MY PLAN ISN'T TO SET FIRES, AMUSING AS THAT IS.
WHILE THEY WAIT, WE TRANSPORT ALL WE CAN.
A TRAP SO SIMPLE IS SIMPLY REVERSED.
.....

AND THANKS TO THE TRAP THEY'VE LAID...
...THE CAPITAL IS WINNER TAKE ALL.
.....
I. SEE.
THE STAKES ARE SO MUCH HIGHER THAN I IMAGINED.
WHO IS TRICKING WHO?
IF WE BET AND LOSE, THEY'LL KILL US ALL AND THEN DESTROY THE CHOUSHUU PROVINCE.
AND THIS MAN SMILES.

IN ANY CASE...
HE'S CRAZIER THAN I THOUGHT.
THIS MAN ENJOYS IT.
THE RESULTS ARE EVERYTHING TO ME.
...A BET, A TRAP, A STRIKE-- IT'S ALL THE SAME.
I WANT TO BE FINISHED HERE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
LISTENING TO YOU DISGUSTS ME.

I'M SO FOND OF STRONG WOMEN.
THAT'S TOO BAD.
HA!
KEEP IT TO YOURSELF...
...OR SAVE YOUR LINES FOR YOUR BOY TOY.
WHAT?!
I'M HIS PAGE, BITCH!
DAMMIT!
PATIENCE...

...IS REVENGE'S ONLY ALLY.
BUT SENSEI!
I'LL HAVE HER HEAD ON A SPIKE FOR TALKING TO ME LIKE THAT!
KITAMURA SUZU

SHE DIDN'T MAKE A FOOL OF ME.
GRR
AND FOR MAKING A FOOL OF YOU, SENSEI, I'LL HAVE HER HEART ON A PLATE!
SHE KEEPS HER FACE HIDDEN! WHY DO WE EVEN KEEP HER?
WHAT IF SHE'S GOING BEHIND OUR BACKS AND REPORTING TO THE SHOGUNATE?
OH NO...
THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT WORRY.
THE TOKUGAWA DESTROYED HER ANCESTORS.
HER REVENGE HAS PATIENCE AND BURNS STEADILY.
?

WE SHALL WREST POWER FROM THE TOKUGAWA, WHO ARE TYING BONDS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO DESTROY JAPAN'S PURITY.
WE SHALL TAKE THEIR POWER AND GIVE IT TO THE EMPEROR. "REVERE THE EMPEROR, EXPEL THE BARBARIANS."
WE SHALL WATCH THE DOWNFALL OF THE SHOGUNATE.
TO THAT END, OUR "BITCHY" NINJA IS A TRUSTWORTHY ALLY.
THAT...
...SEEMS LOGICAL. BUT...
...ISN'T IT UNFAIR, THEN?

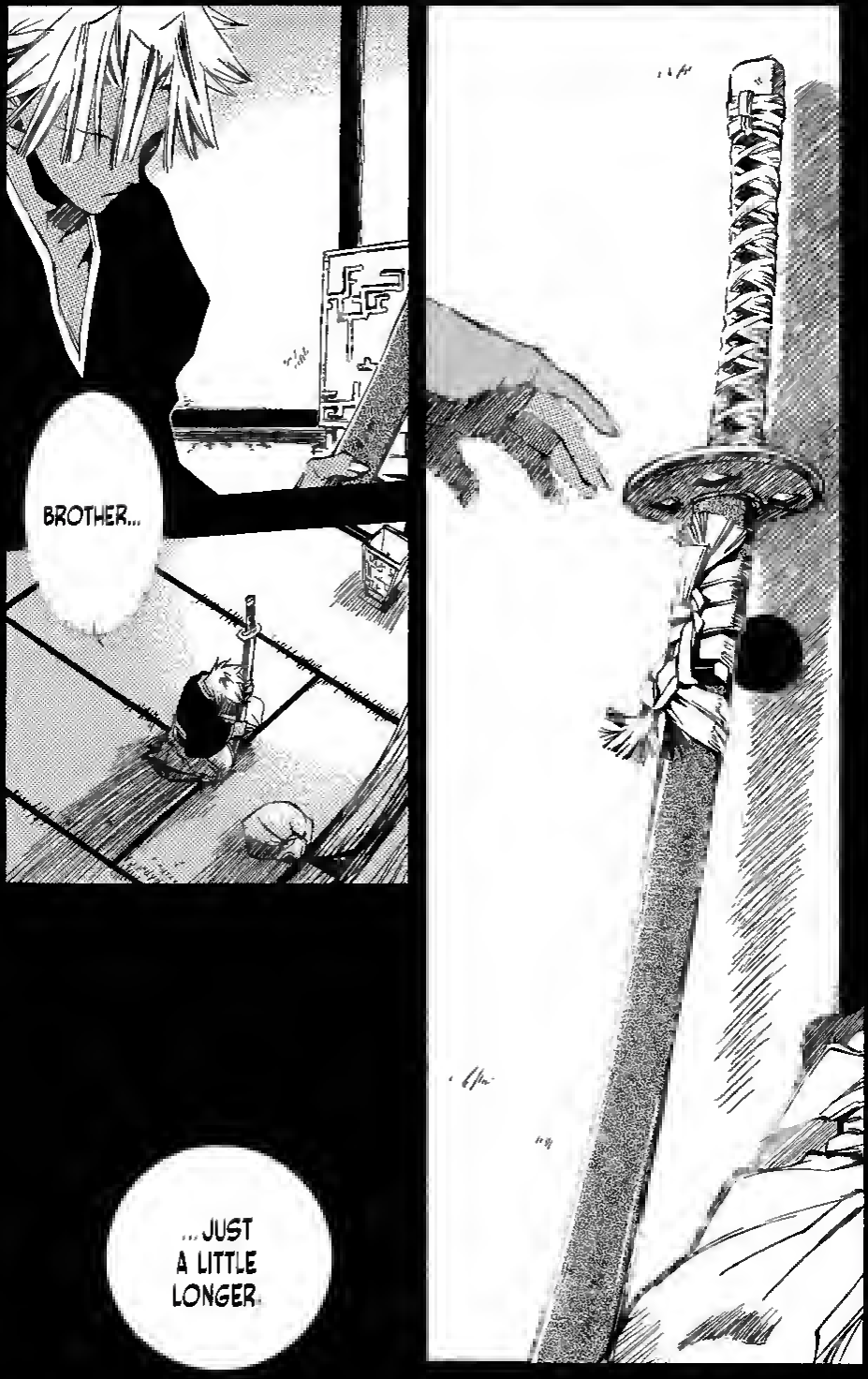
Heh heh...
I WANT TO HELP YOU, TOO!
TO MAKE HER YOUR BODYGUARD, I MEAN? THAT'S NOT HER JOB.
I'M BEGGING YOU, YOSHIDA-SENSEI.
.....
LET ME WIELD MY KATANA AS YOUR RIGHT ARM!
I'M NOW 15 YEARS OLD. I'M NO LONGER A CHILD.

MY RIGHT ARM IS MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU THINK.
SUZU.
DON'T BE SO HASTY TO BECOME A MAN.
……
ハッ!
YOUR "WIDOW'S SCABBARD" MAY TOO SOON TASTE SHINSENGUMI BLOOD.

I HATE IT.
THE BLOOD OF THE SHINSEN-GUMI.
...
...

YOU MAY GO AND SLEEP NOW.
DON'T LET YOUR NERVES OVERTAKE YOU.
ふぅ…
ooo

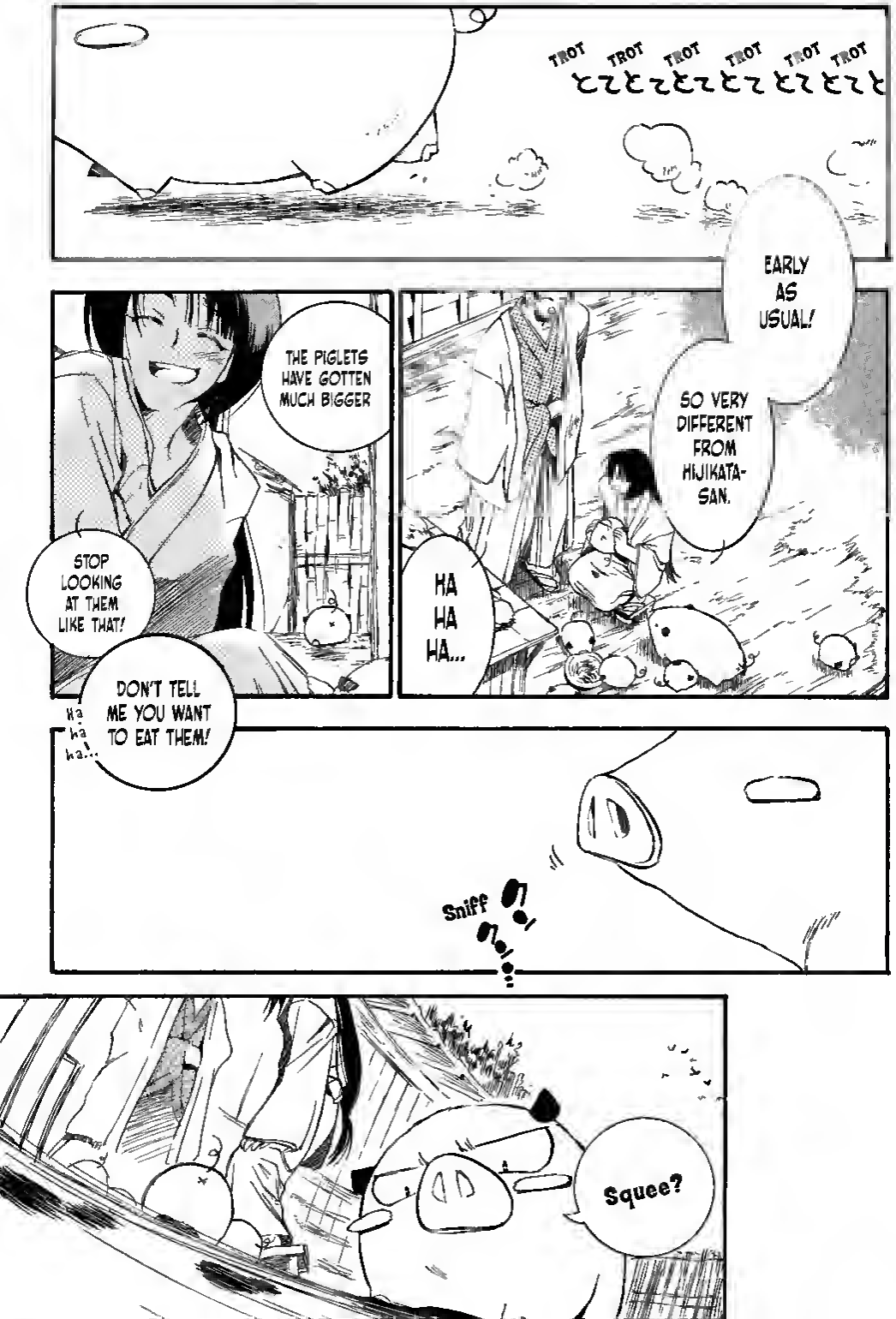
……
ギリ…


BROTHER...
...JUST A LITTLE LONGER.

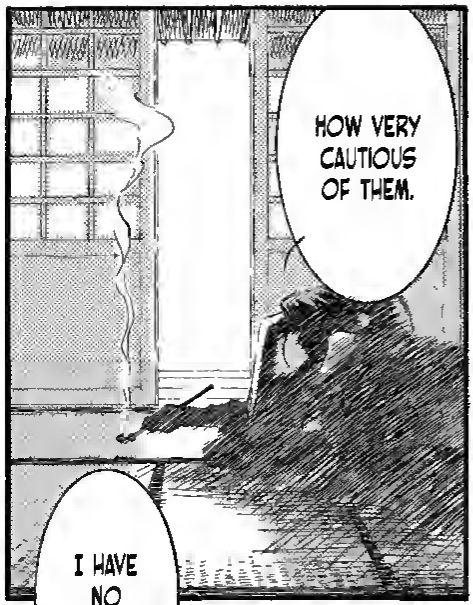
THE HEADS OF THE MIBURO...
I WILL HAVE THEM.

HI, THERE!
COME NOW!
DON'T FIGHT OVER IT!
GOOD MORNING, OKITA-KUN!
GOOD MORNING, YAMANAMI-SAN! ♡

Act.10
Some Other Guy

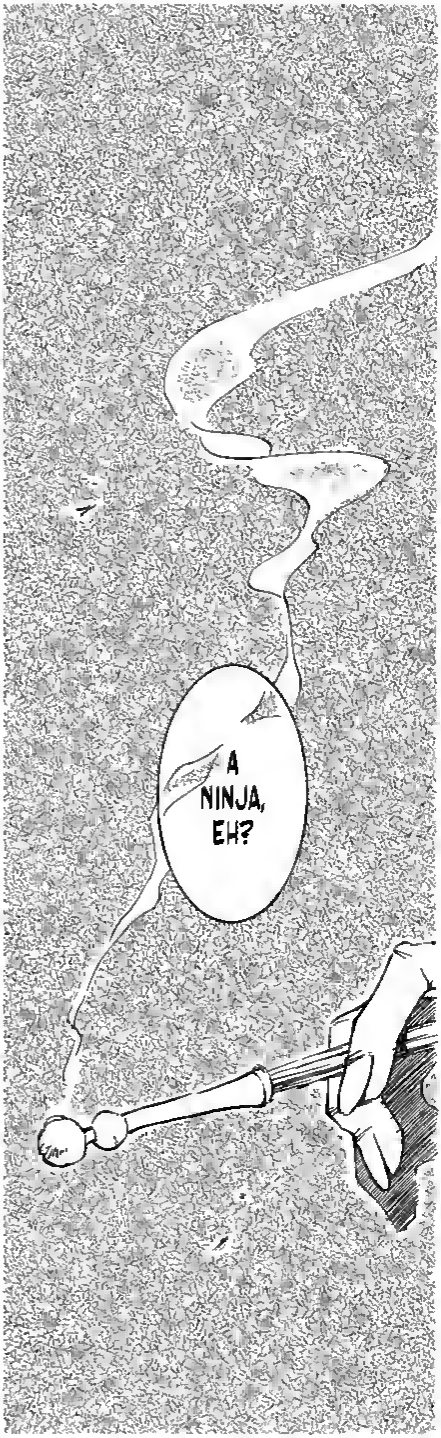

TROT TROT TROT TROT TROT TROT
とてとてとてとてとてとてとてとて
EARLY AS USUAL!
SO VERY DIFFERENT FROM HIJIKATA-SAN.
HA HA HA...
THE PIGLETS HAVE GOTTEN MUCH BIGGER
STOP LOOKING AT THEM LIKE THAT!
DON'T TELL ME YOU WANT TO EAT THEM!
Ha ha ha...
Sniff
Squee?

Squee--?


HOW VERY CAUTIOUS OF THEM.

I HAVE NO EXCUSE.

AND SINCE THEY'RE NOT LEAVING MASUYA...
...IT SEEMS YOSHIDA'S GAMBLING WITH US.


A NINJA, EH?

I DON'T LIKE PLAYING GAMES, THOUGH.
I'LL CATCH HIM...
...NO MATTER WHAT I HAVE TO DO.
LET'S LEAVE THE INVESTIGATION OF MASUYA...
...TO THE "HAIRDRESSER'S BOW" FOR NOW.

HEEEY!
IF YOU CAN HEAR US, YOU SHOULD ANSWER!
ICHIMURA TETSU-KUN!

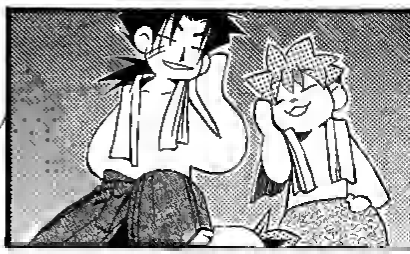
Yo....
ミチオ...
IT'S GOOD THAT YOU'RE WORKING HARD.
Wait, wait.
UNUSUALLY SMART TALK FROM YOU. BUT DON'T MAKE HIM MAD.
HEY! "IRETSU" MEANS IRON! IT SHOULD GET STRONGER THE MORE YOU HIT IT!
WHAT'S THAT? SLACKER!

YOU'RE AN ARROGANT LITTLE BRAT!
BUT YOU WENT A LITTLE OVERBOARD, HUH?
WORKING UNTIL YOUR BODY GIVES OUT IS NO WAY TO TRAIN.
Oh...
SPEAKING OF...
?
...WHAT'S WRONG, TETSU-KUN? WHAT'S GOT YOU ALL SERIOUS?
OOH!
AAH?
COULD IT BE A GIRL? HAVE YOU GOT A LITTLE SOMETHING GOING ON?!
NO, NO. IT'S... HOW DO I PUT IT?

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE FELT SO...
...
IMMATURE.

YOU IDIOT! NOW SHINPACHI'S ALL DEPRESSED!
What's happened to me? He's so idiotic and I couldn't come up with a comeback.
Sano, I'm done for... You need to find a good comeback for me.
Shinpa--?! Dammit! Are you giving up comedy?!
Knock it off! When are you ever serious?!
JUST GO, YOU GUYS.
YO!

Pant
Pant

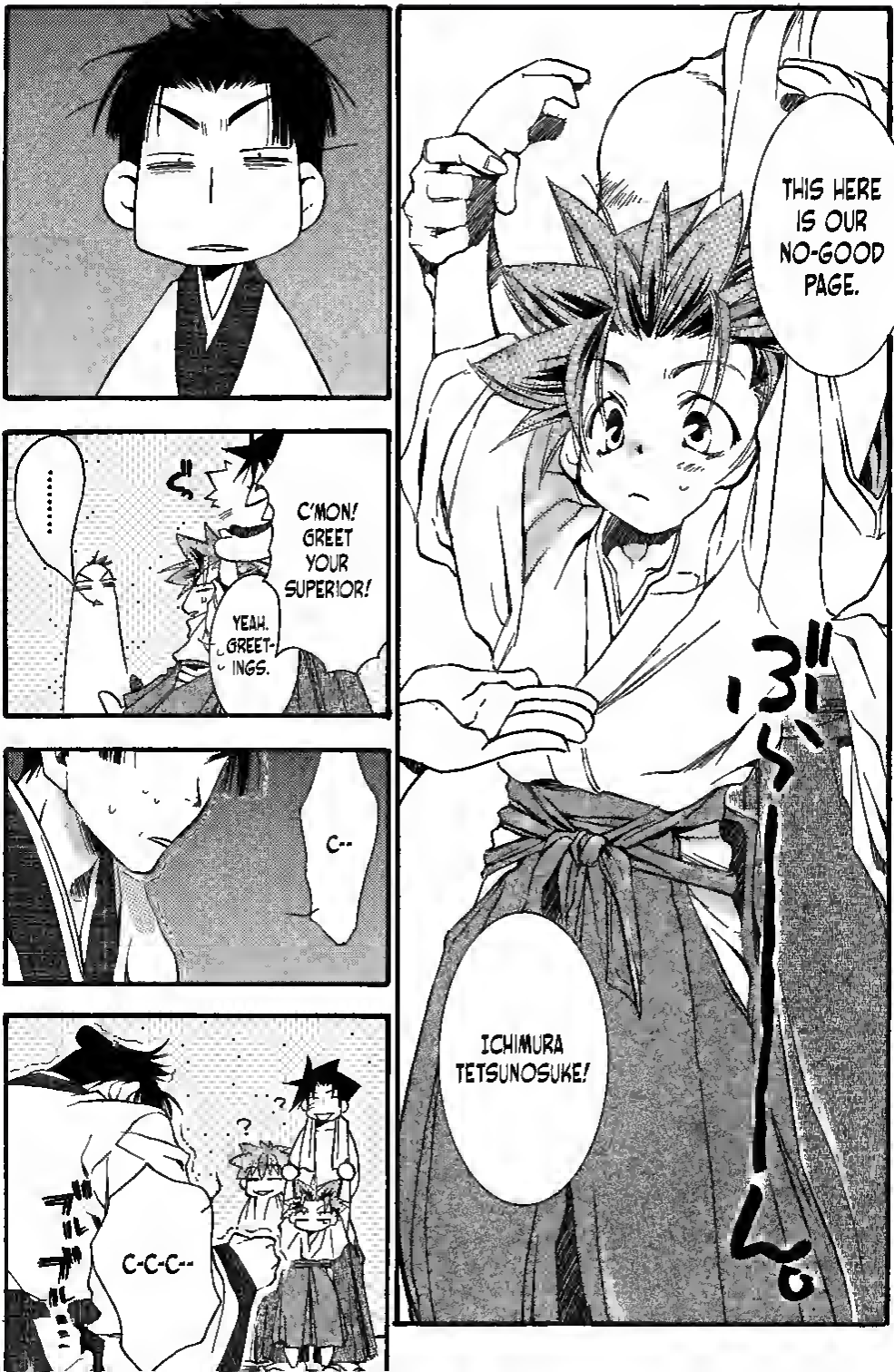


Ah!
Ack!

HEY THERE, SANO, SHINPA-TSUAN!
OUR COMEDY TEAM!
TOUDOU HEISUKE
YO! HEISUKE!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU'RE THE THIRD ONE IN THE PAIR! I MEAN-- UH, ARE YOU GOING OFF TO TRAIN?
YEAH.
WHY ARE YOU GETTING ALL SERIOUS ON US NOW?
WHO?
YEAH, WHAT'S UP WITH THAT?
I HAVE TO ASK...
Well, whatever
?

HIJIKATA'S NEW PAGE.
HOW CUTE IS HE?!
HUH?
HE MUST BE QUITE THE BEAUTIFUL BOY.
I KEEP LOOKING FOR THE CUTIE, AND I HAVEN'T FOUND HIM YET!
.....
HIJIKATA WON'T BUDGE FOR ANYONE BUT A REAL BEAUTY!
HE APPOINTED HIM AS HIS PAGE PERSONALLY!
EVEN IF THE TEA'S BAD, HE WON'T COMPLAIN!
HE ALLOWED HIM TO JOIN BECAUSE HE "LOOKS LIKE SOUJI!"
I DON'T GET IT.
I'VE IMAGINED HIM.

WA HA HA HA !!
HEISUKE, YOU'D BETTER PUT THAT IMAGE OUT OF YOUR MIND.
WHAAAAAT?!
It's for your own good!
MY STOMACH HURTS!
Clean, white skin and pretty hands with a tenorous voice and speech so polite that all who look on him must stop and exclaim at how radiant he is...
HE PROBABLY LOOKS LIKE THIS:
I KNOW! HE'S GOOD IN BED!
YOU'RE FREE TO YELL ALL YOU WANT, BUT IF HIJIKATA-SAN HEARS HE'LL CUT YOU DOWN, BROTHER.
Whoa!
WELL, THEN...
My scar's tingling again!
...HERE'S YOUR ANSWER:
Huh?


THIS HERE IS OUR NO-GOOD PAGE.
ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE!
C'MON! GREET YOUR SUPERIOR!
YEAH. GREET-INGS.
C--
C-C-C--

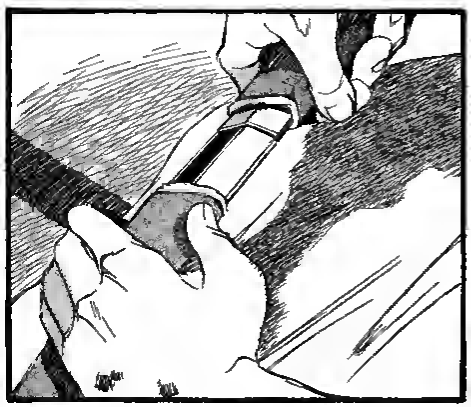
CUUUTE!!
HE'S REALLY CUTE!
WHAT?!
わぁ
……
ギュッ
WAH! THAT HEAD HAS A NICE SHAPE--AND LOOK AT HIS PETITE ARMS AND LEGS!
JUST LIKE A PUPPY!
OH, YEAH!
WHA?!
YOU LIKE BABY ANIMALS, DON'T YOU?!
WHA?!
OH, SO IT'S LIKE THAT, HUH?
Grab to bit

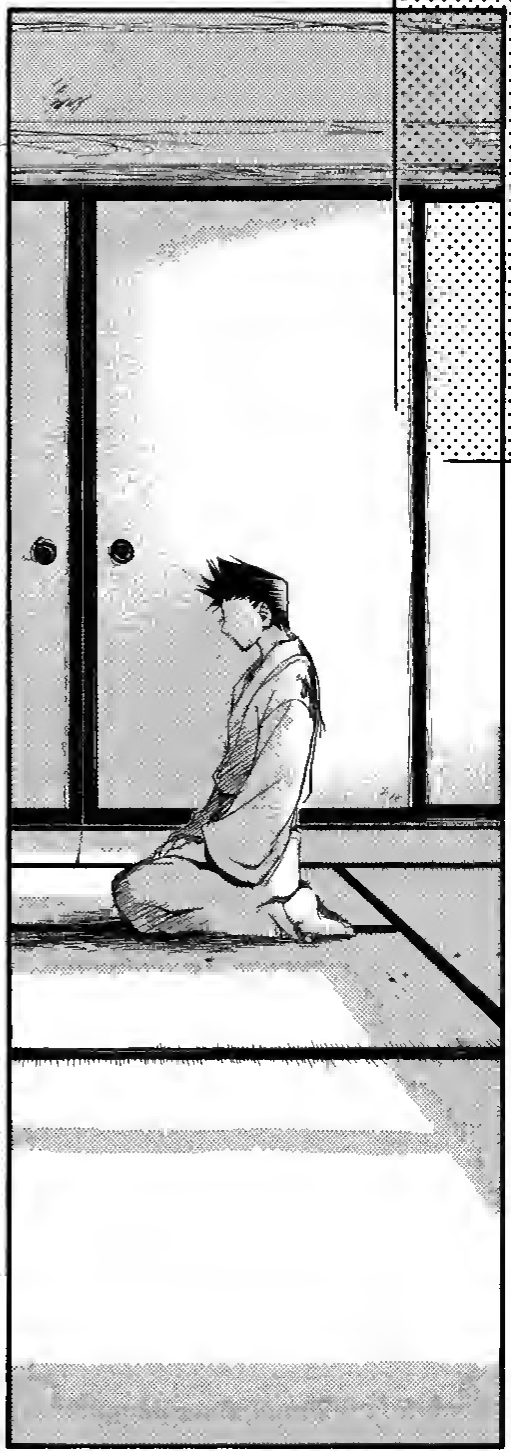
I'll beat him to death!
Let me go!
AWW! HE'S EVEN CUTE WHEN HE'S ANGRY!
HE'S ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
DAMN YOU! WHO'S A PUPPY?! WHO'S A BABY ANIMAL?!
OF COURSE, SHINPA-TSUAN IS SMALL AND CUTE, TOO.
Like a tanuki!
Ugh. Stop it.
WILL YOU KNOCK IT OFF?
...SO THIS IS HIJIKATA-SAN'S TYPE?
?
WELL, ANYWAY...
BUT MY AUDIENCE HAS A BIG HEART!
How rude.
THIS GUY'S ALWAYS HAD A DIRTY MOUTH.
Fume
Fume
SORRY, TETSU-KUN. HE DOESN'T MEAN ANYTHING BY IT.

Do you realize how near you are to the end of your life?
THAT'S RIGHT, I'M BIG-HEARTED!
Uh huh!
TAKE SANO, FOR EXAMPLE! EVEN IF YOU CALLED HIM AN IGNORANT MEATHEAD IDIOT, HE'D STILL FORGIVE YOU. THAT'S HOW BIG HIS HEART IS!
It's good he's an idiot.

Shieikan: Dojo from where many prominent Shinsengumi members came

I'M TOUDOU HEISUKE. I'VE BEEN WITH THE SHINSENGUMI SINCE THE SHIEIKAN...BUT I'M STILL QUITE YOUNG!
WEIRD GUY.
AH, THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE ICHIMURA-KUN, YES?
I FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.
I'M FOND OF CUTE THINGS AND I CAN HOLD MY OWN WITH A SWORD. PLEASED TO MEET YOU!
UH... OKAY.
Where are you looking?





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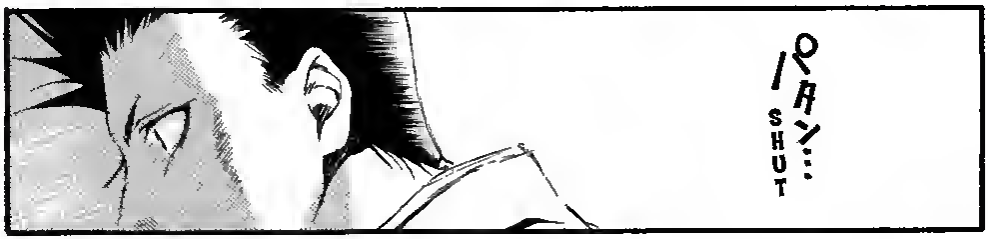
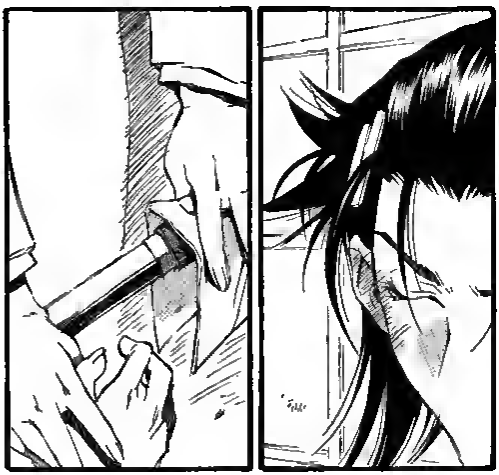

ピシャ…
SHUT



A BACK WOUND, HMM?

I DON'T NEED TREATMENT.
ACCORDING TO THE SAMURAI CODE, AFTER A FAILURE--
SCREW THE SAMURAI CODE.
DON'T YOU CARE WHAT HIJIKATA-SAN THINKS?
RITUAL SUICIDE LEAVES YOUR WORK HALF-DONE.
THAT'S SHAME, NOT HONOR.
.....?
ひじかた
HIJIKATA-SAN REALLY TRUSTS YOU.

IF YOU'RE KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY, THAT'S ONE THING...
IF YOU DON'T DIE, YOU CAN DO 100, EVEN 200 MORE JOBS.
...DON'T GET ME WRONG.
BUT YOU...
...ARE NOT A SAMURAI.

YOU'RE A NINJA.
DON'T FORGET THAT.

OH! COME SEE, OUR COMEDY TRIO IS BACK TOGETHER!
Ah?
THAT LITTLE ONE IS THE ICHIMURA KID, RIGHT?
IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S MAD.
SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?
YEAH, BUT IF I REMEMBER RIGHT HE'S THE VICE COMMANDER'S--
PAGE!
41
I was yesterday what he'd been doing since this morning and I thought, you idiot, what about your work, you're neglecting your work, and you're only a page and I don't care if you don't like it, if you don't do it they'll get angry and then--oh, is he with Harada-san, Nagakura-san and Toudou-san?
UWA!
Come on, you three, give me a break! Even if it's spring, it's still cold, you'll catch your death dressed like that! It doesn't matter if I said idiots don't catch colds--oh, come on, he's being rude again, don't poke him like that, he'll just get dumber, don't make him cry, once he cries it's too late--

YOU IDIOT, YESTERDAY YOU CAME HOME COVERED IN BRUISES!
I KNOW IT'S PROBABLY UNTHINKABLE FOR MY TETSU...
BUT SOMEONE COULD TREAT HIM DISRESPECTFULLY...
IS HE BEING BULLIED?!
UGH!!
Are you hearing that weird noise?
Do you think we should call someone?
OH FATHER AND MOTHER IN HEAVEN, TELL ME WHAT TO DO! MY IDIOT LITTLE BROTHER IS BEING ABUSED!
THE ICHIMURA FAMILY IS IN DANGER OF BEING TORN APART!
THE LITTLE BROTHER DOESN'T LISTEN!
SIGH
A MELODRAMATIC PESSIMIST

CLICK
THAT SOUND...
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
...AN ABACUS?!
DAMMIT! I SHOULD BE AT WORK RIGHT NOW!
CLICK
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
BREAK TIME'S OVER.
Ha'ha. He'll get mad again
IT'S PROBABLY KAWAI-SAN.
EEE!!

AH ...?
AH!
TATSU!
What's he doing?
AND THE ONE BEHIND HIM...
...ISN'T THAT YAMANAMI-SAN?
?

"TIME IS MONEY!"
YOU SHOULDN'T WASTE IT, ICHIMURA-KUN.

Act.11
Ask Me Why

PLEASED TO MEET YOU, ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE-KUN.
.....?
I'M YAMANAMI KEISUKE, THE MANAGER HERE.
BUT IF YOU'RE FEELING LIGHT-HEARTED...
YAMANAMI KEISUKE
AH... HELLO.
...YOU MAY CALL ME SANNAN IF YOU LIKE.
YOU KNOW...
?!
ひぃっ

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO PLAY.
HOW OLD ARE YOU, TETSU-KUN?
Hmm?
.....
TREATED LIKE A CHILD
WHY DON'T YOU QUIT YOUR PRACTICE, INVITE OKITA-KUN AND COME PLAY WITH GRAMPS?
THAT SOUNDS LIKE FUN, DOESN'T IT? ♡
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN SUCH A CUTE SHINSENGUMI MEMBER.
I'M FIFTEEN.
.....
NOPE, HE REALLY IS LITTLE--
Hmm. I think perhaps my glasses have fogged a little

In shock, for Yamanami meant well.

Tatsu
..A FRIEND OF TATSU'S?
HE'S MY BOSS!
How rude!!
HEY... ARE YOU...
.....
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO SPEAK POLITELY TO SUPERIORS! I'M BEGGING YOU! SPEAK POLITELY!
I'm sorry! I'm sorry, really!
SO ARE YOU A BIG SHOT AROUND HERE? Or something?
WELL, THE ABACUS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MY POSITION.
HOW CAN I PUT IT...
...I FEEL MORE AT EASE WHEN I'M CALCULATING SOMETHING, SO I CARRY IT WITH ME EVERYWHERE.
MATH HELPS WHEN I FEEL FRUSTRATED BY OTHER THINGS.
SCARY!

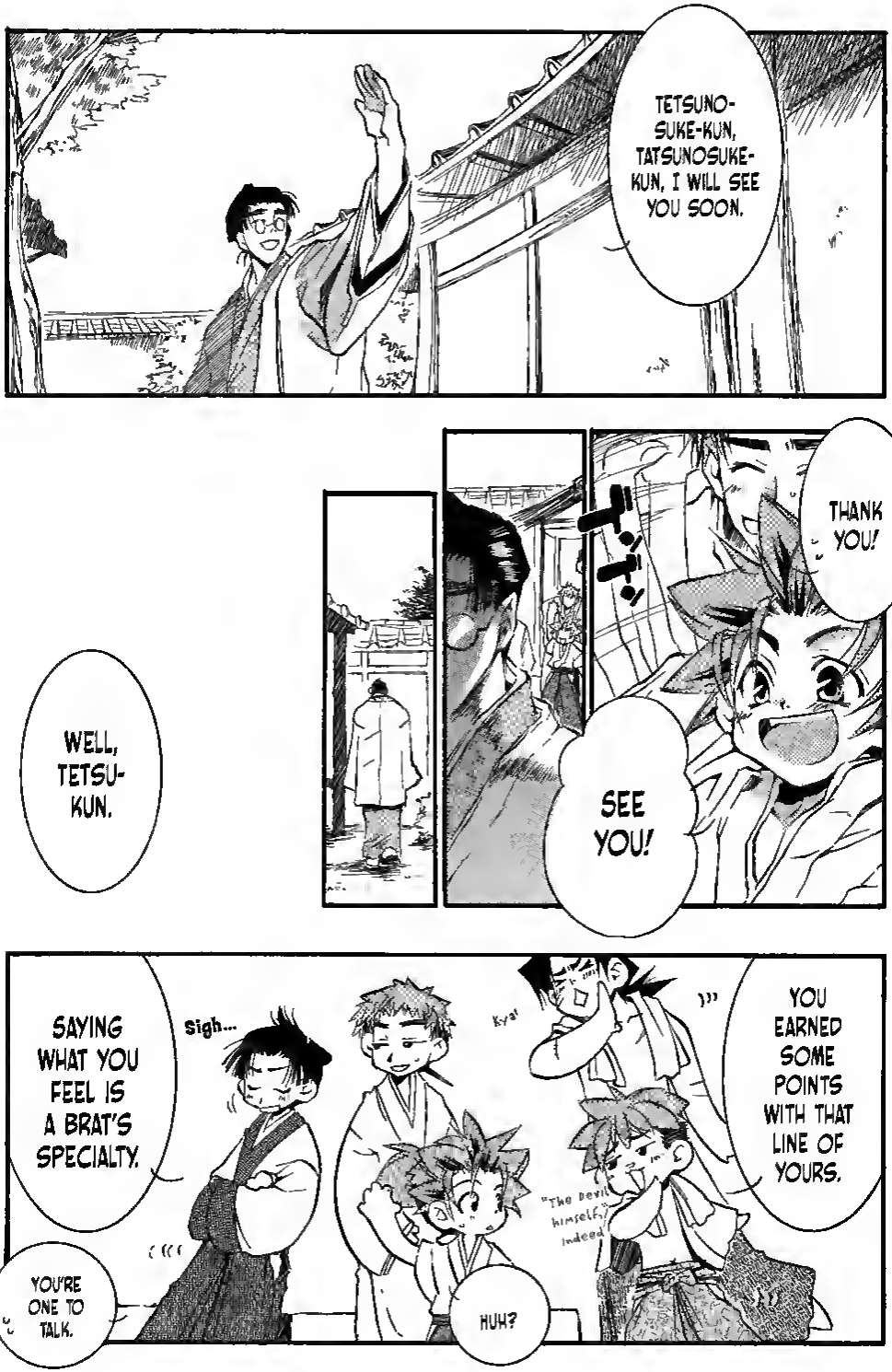
Ha ha...
I'M NOT THAT SUPERIOR TO THEM
I'M JUST A VICE COMMANDER.
I see.
HMM...
THAT SO?
You, too!!
BUT HE'S GOT A TOTALLY DIFFERENT VIBE FROM TATSU. THEY COULDN'T BE FRIENDS.
THAT SO?
HE SEEMS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVERYONE ELSE.
?
.....
.....

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN UNTIL NOW?!
IDIOT VICE COMMANDER!!!
WHILE YOU'VE BEEN GONE THE DEVIL HIMSELF HAS BEEN OUR BOSS!
THAT'S WHY HE'S SO SCARY! HE'S A FAKE!
WHY HAVE YOU BEEN GONE?! PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
Ha wa wa
Gya!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SHOULD PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER!
ARE YOUR EARS BURNING, HIJIKATA-KUN?!
Ha ha--
NOW YOU'VE DONE IT! YOU'RE IN TROUBLE-- HURRY AND RUN AWAY!

HIJI-KATA-KUN?
SHAME!
HERE IN THE SHINSENGUMI, WE HAVE TWO VICE COMMANDERS.
Oh no.
ALL OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE SHINSENGUMI ARE DECIDED BY COMMANDER KONDOU, VICE COMMANDER YAMANAMI AND VICE COMMANDER HIJIKATA.
DIRECTOR
VICE COMMANDERS
SURELY TWO PEOPLE WILL PROVIDE TWICE AS MUCH WISDOM.
.....
IS THAT SO? IT LOOKS TO ME LIKE A ONE-MAN SHOW BY THE DEMON VICE COMMANDER.
YOU REALLY HAD NO IDEA, TETSU?!
Hm?
WHAT'S THAT?

UM...YAMA-NAMI-SAN, WAS IT?
YOU SHOULD BE THE ONLY VICE COMMANDER.
I'D LIKE TO BE YAMANAMI-SAN OR KONDOU-SAN'S PAGE.
THEY'RE GOOD PEOPLE AND THEY SEEM REAL NICE.
THANK YOU, TETSUNOSUKE-KUN.
BLUSH
AH... EHH...

YAMA-NAMI-SAN!
WELL THEN, I SHOULD GET BACK NOW.
!
...BUILT MY COURAGE A LITTLE.
THANKS TO YOU, I'VE...
IF IT'S JUST TO BE THERE FOR YOU, WE'LL GO, TOO.
Yeah, yeah!
TO SPEAK FOR YOU? IF SUCH A NEED COMES UP?
I'M NOT SURE IF I'LL BE ANY HELP, BUT WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO COME ALONG?
.....?
Ha ha ha...
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT. I'M NOT A CHILD, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY.
BUT--
WHAT, DO I LOOK LIKE I'M GOING OFF TO A FIGHT?


TETSUNO-SUKE-KUN, TATSUNOSUKE-KUN, I WILL SEE YOU SOON.
THANK YOU!
SEE YOU!
WELL, TETSU-KUN.
YOU EARNED SOME POINTS WITH THAT LINE OF YOURS.
Kya!
"The devil himself," indeed
HUH?
Sigh...
SAYING WHAT YOU FEEL IS A BRAT'S SPECIALTY.
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK.

BUT YOU KNOW...
...IT'S STRANGE, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT.
VICE COMMANDERS ARE VICE COMMANDERS, BUT...
. WE'VE GOT ONE ANGELIC VICE COMMANDER..
...AND ONE DEMONIC VICE COMMANDER.

SAY, TOSHI...
...I THINK HE BELONGS IN THE FIRST SQUAD.
TETSUNOSUKE-KUN AND OKITA-KUN REALLY LIKE EACH OTHER.
OKITA COULD USE A YOUNGER BROTHER FIGURE.
Yes.

.....
BUT WE DON'T HAVE ANY UNIFORMS SMALL ENOUGH FOR HIM.
BUT HE'S NOT DONE GROWING. GIVE HIM ONE THAT'S JUST A LITTLE BIT TOO LARGE.
EXCUSE ME.
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU TWO DISCUS-SING?
OH! SANNAN!
YOU'VE PERFECT TIMING. JOIN US.
.....

SO.
WE WERE JUST DISCUSSING OUR NEW COMRADE.
Ah.
ICHIMURA TETSUNOSUKE-KUN, YES? I JUST MET HIM.
HE'S A VERY BRIGHT CHILD WITH A GOOD HEART.
.....
WAIT A MINUTE.
IT'S CRITICAL THAT THE KATANA BE A SUITABLE SIZE.
HIS SIZE IS A PROBLEM. THE UNIFORM AND KATANA ARE TOO LARGE.

IT WAS YOU, HIJIKATA-KUN!
I HEARD IT WAS YOU WHO ADMITTED HIS ENLISTMENT.
.....

Eep!
W-WAIT, WAIT, YOU TWO. YOU'VE JUST REUNITED. WHY ARE YOU ALREADY STARING DAGGERS ACROSS THE ROOM?
Ha ha ha...
!?
LET'S DISCUSS THIS CALMLY.
WE AREN'T SHORTHANDED. WE DON'T HAVE TO GIVE HIM MISSIONS.
YOU'RE A SMART MAN.
YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD HAPPEN.
THE CHOUJIN HAVE BEEN GETTING LIVELIER.
HE IS UNPREPARED FOR SO BLOODY A CONFLICT.

SANNAN! YOU'RE MISTAKEN. TOSHI HASN'T DONE ANYTHING--
IS HE YOUR PAWN, MY LIEGE?
I'VE ALREADY MADE MY DECISION.
DO YOU WANT TO MAKE HIM YOUR LITTLE KILLER?
DEEP SILENCE...

HEH HEH HEH...
YOU SPEAK WITH ART ON TOPICS YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.
WHAT?
THIS CONVER-SATION IS OVER.

WE HAVE NO NEED TO MAKE THAT SMALL BOY A KILLER.
WAIT...
WAIT JUST A MINUTE, HIJIKATA-KUN!
ICHIMURA IS MY PAGE.
YOU'VE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT, RIGHT?

パタン
KONDOU-SAN... IS HE...
ICHIMURA-KUN... IS HIJIKATA-KUN'S...
I THOUGHT PERHAPS WE SHOULD TEACH HIM.
HIS PAGE. YES.
I'VE THOROUGHLY DOUBTED HIJIKATA-KUN.
CAN'T BLAME YOU. LATELY TOSHI HASN'T BEEN VERY TOSHI-LIKE AT ALL.
Mm-hmm
I HAVE NO IDEA WHY, BUT...

トン…
……
…NO MATTER.
HE DOESN'T WANT THE BOY TO TAKE UP A KATANA.

Eh heh heh!
PERFECT TIMING!
KEEP ME COMPANY, HIJIKATA-SAN!
.....

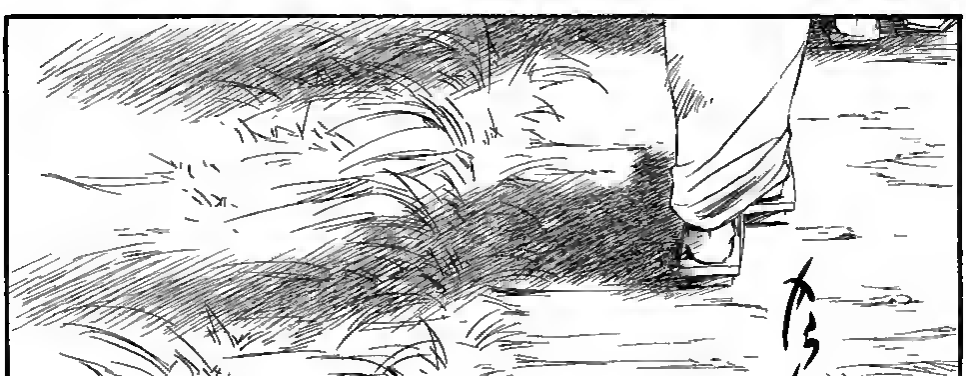
ONE BAG OF THESE COOKIES.
OH, HIJIKATA-SAN!
BUY THESE FOR ME, PLEASE! AND THIS! ♡
THANK YOU FOR YOUR BUSINESS.
IT'S OKAY FOR YOU TO EAT SOME, HIJIKATA-SAN.
THEY'RE SO TASTY!
CLOP
CLOP
HOW COULD I EAT THAT BRAT FOOD?
OH, NO, NO. THAT'S THE WRONG WAY TO THINK ABOUT IT!
KYO CANDIES ARE WORKS OF ART!
MAYBE YOU WANT SOME PICKLED DAIKON RADISH?
NO!

Hijikata-san, let's play make believe.
WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
YOU DIDN'T BRING ME OUT HERE TO BUY YOU CANDY.
HIJIKATA-SAN, DON'T BE MEAN. YOU LOOKED LIKE YOU DIDN'T WANT TO BE THERE, SO I BROUGHT YOU ON AN ESCAPE.
Sigh...
WHY MUST LEADERS OF THE SHINSENGUMI SPEND TIME DEBATING ABOUT SOME BRAT?
YES. I HEARD EVERY WORD.
THE ONLY ONE TALKING ABOUT TETSU-KUN WAS KONDOU-SAN.

AND I DON'T JUST MEAN YOUR ROOM.
I CAN SEE THROUGH YOUR WALLS.
.....
YEAH, AMAZING.
ギリギリ...
OH! BUT...
...THERE IS SOMETHING I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND.
?
WHY.
.....

WHY WON'T YOU LET TETSU-KUN TAKE UP A KATANA?
WHY CAN'T HE...
...CHOOSE FOR HIMSELF?
.....
MORON.
HE'S JUST SOME FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD KID!
NINE YEARS OLD.

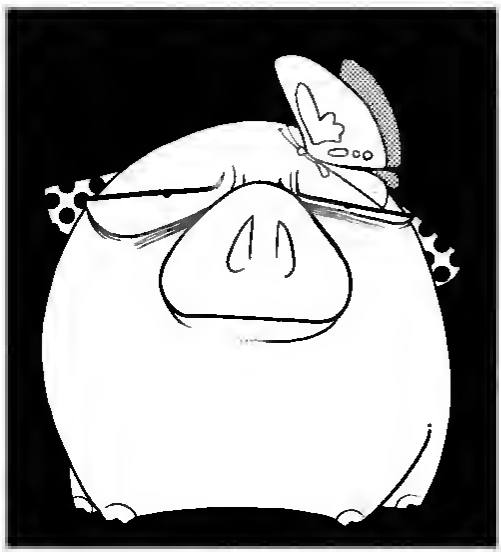
I WAS...
...NINE YEARS OLD.



……
AH.
THAT'S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT.
ふぅ…

YOU DON'T WANT ANOTHER ME, DO YOU?

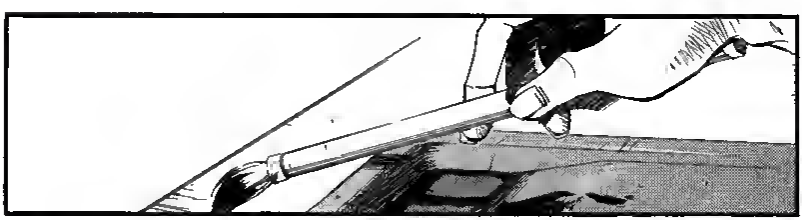
Continued in Peace Maker 3



In the Next

PEACE MAKER
ピースメーカー

In a pleasure house
Enemies may meet as friends
Until the dream ends.



Coming Soon!